A Complete Story by Margaret Deland on Page 16.

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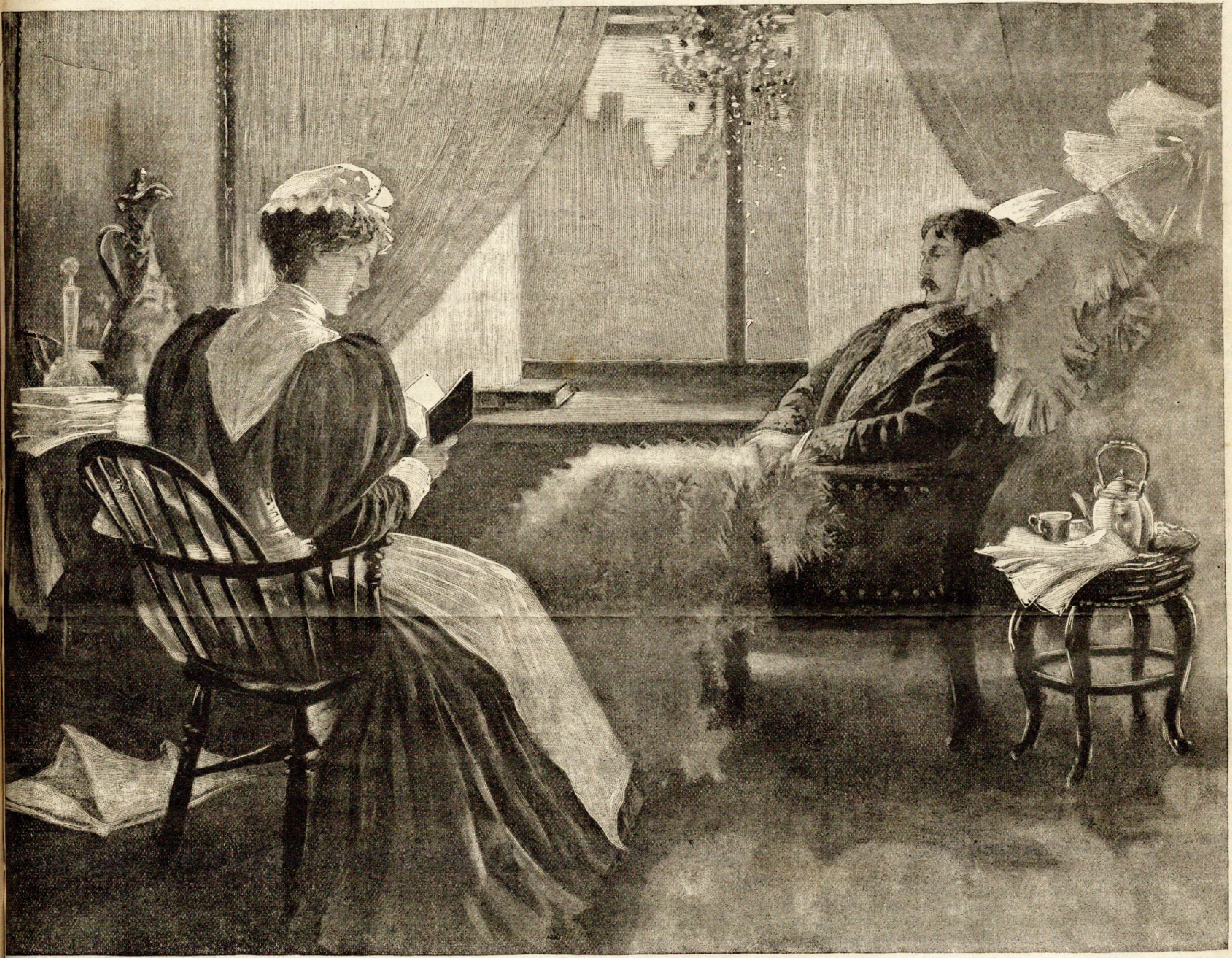

SHE HAD TO READ TO HIM AND AMUSE HIM.

A PROFESSIONAL.*

BY MAY D. HATCH.

This Story is Complete in This Number.

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CHAPTER I.

THE hard novitiate was over. Mildred Owen had completed her two years of hospital service and training, and received her diploma. When it was handed to her, she felt like taking a long breath—like giving a deep sigh of relief.

She had worked faithfully all these months studying hard, doing her duty day after day, through weary nights of anxiety, through hours of responsibility, when the life of some weak brother seemed to hang on her watchfulness. She had grown intensely interested in the cases, as every true man or woman will who has the slightest instinct of the physician; and after the first few weeks of sympathetic suffering with each patient, which she found hurtful to all concerned, she had stopped this leakage of energy and grown calm and self-reliant, losing none of her tender pity for the sufferers, only becoming more capable of helping them. But she had not realized in all this time the tension she had been kept to until now, when at last she was free to go out into the world with the Hospital's sanction that she was capable of intelligently carrying out a physician's orders, with an elementary knowledge of medicine, and the unlisted resources which equip that modern blessing, a trained nurse. Among the many letters of congratulation that she received was one from her old friend, Celia Winston, whose stage-name was Cissie Winters, leading lady of the "Boston Gayeties."

They had been babies together in the old Virginia home, and schoolgirls in such school-days as they could get, driving ten miles to the "seminary" from their adjoining places when the horses were not needed for farm work, or when the roads would permit. But they had read much together, and learned to cover up their slender foundations with an ivy of wit and a literary reference that were quite bewitching. They had the wonderfully soft voice, too, of the Virginia woman, which in itself is a treasure in conversation; and though hard times had driven them both to work and independence, they were of "such stuff" as social success is made of. Cissie had been the first to start out, spurred thereto by amateur theatricals, a fine presence, a clear voice, and the accidental introduction to a prominent stage manager stopping in Richmond.

When Cissie had really gone, and the prospect of the gray grind of a long winter slowly unrolled before Mildred's vision, it seemed as if it would be impossible to bear it. She had her home duties, of course, yet poor as they were, they had two colored women to do the actual work, and her mother was far too young to give the superintendence of the household over into her charge. But the lack of money was dire, though they had land enough to make them rich if they could only sell it, and she longed to go out into the world as the boys and now Cissie had done, to seek for the yellow dust. One by one the boys had started out, but they needed all they could earn for their own support, and when they got beyond that they immediately married, and then there was never enough.

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The winter dragged by, and then came another beautiful dream of summer, when it was happiness just to be alive, and then winter again, and she had done nothing, until the inspiration of being a trained nurse came to her one day when, a trivial accident having befallen one of the negro children on the place, the country doctor had complimented her upon her skill in caring for the child until his arrival. That day seemed part of another life to her. Then she had been a silly girl, now she was a self-reliant woman with a profession and work to do in the world.

This is the letter she received from Celia Winston:

> MY DEAR MILDRED: Many congratulations on your graduation, and now that you are at last through with that beastly hospital, won't you tear off cap and apron and take a vacation during Thanksgiving week with me? I am sure it would do you good before starting out on your career.
>
> You can room with me, and it will cost you nothing. Do come and have a good talk of the dear old times.
>
> We play at Binghamton to-night, Ithaca to-morrow night and the rest of the week in Elmira. Come to the theatre, present this card and ask for me. Devotedly always, CISSIE.

Should she go? She consulted with Doctor Bunt, the house-surgeon, what her chances were for an immediate case outside; he told her to put her name on what she considered the best Nurse's Register and to keep him posted as to where she was, so he could telegraph if he needed her, and that a week's rest would be money in her pocket. So she went.

She reached Elmira on Saturday afternoon at half-past four, left her grip to be called for at the station and started for the theatre.

The *matinée* performance was just over, but she hurried up to the gatekeeper, presenting the card, and he passed her over to the care of an usher. The theatre seats were being covered, the lights were out, all but the footlights, for the men were setting the stage for the evening performance; but the orchestra was still in place, and some kind of a rehearsal seemed to be going on.

"Miss Winters is practicing a new song," said the usher; "you can wait here if you like until she is through, and I will take your card in to her."

Mildred slipped into a chair, far back in the darkened theatre, and watched her old comrade eagerly. In a dainty summer costume, she was rehearsing a duet and dance with a gentleman in the uniform of an English officer. It was a very pretty song, and they sang and danced together in charming harmony.

"Now just that last part together once more, if you please," said the leader of the orchestra. They went through it again. "I am very much obliged to you," said the leader; "that goes very well."

Then the two bowed and ran lightly off the stage, the arm of the uniform sharply defined about the waist of the summer frock, which seemed quite unnecessary to Mildred, now that the rehearsal was over. She rose, watching the setting of the scene, completely fascinated. The front steps were rolled out to the manor-house at one side, the trees were planted in position, and the intricacies of the garden walks laid out.

"Miss Winters begs you to go to her dressing-room," said the usher, making her jump, so interested had she become in the proceedings on the stage.

She hurried along after him to the back of the stage and down some steps. The usher knocked at a door, Cissie called, "Come in," and the two girls were in each other's arms.

Miss Winters, who was much *en déshabille*, having removed the garden party affair, dressed with a celerity that was astounding to one who had known her leisurely youthful habits. When she was dressed, hat and all, she took another rub at her face, from which she had removed most of the paint.

"It is not quite all off yet," Mildred remarked, watching her lovingly.

"Well, never mind—come on, it will have to go on again to-night," Cissie answered; and pulling her veil down, they were off for the hotel.

At dinner Mildred was presented to the "leading man," whom she recognized at once as the owner of the uniform; to a Mrs. Blossomedoff, who played the mother of the company both on and off the stage; to the travelling manager and to the "leading juvenile."

The rest of the company, she learned, were at a less expensive hotel, better suited to their diminishing salaries.

Mildred thought them a very pleasant party. She could not quite understand all their allusions, as they seemed to have a great many little jokes among themselves, but they were very attentive to her, and she found them intensely interesting.

They discussed the incidents of the *matinée* very thoroughly—so exhaustively, in fact, that Mildred asked if it was a new play—a remark which amused them immensely, for, as they told her, they had nearly reached their three hundredth performance of it. She afterwards discovered that every performance was analyzed in the same way, and she wondered, when the presentations of a play got into the hundreds, that they did not find this wearisome.

A diversion was occasioned during dinner by Mrs. Blossomedoff. A covered dish had been placed in front of her, but as the servants did not pass it she had the curiosity to raise the cover; she dropped it with alacrity, and the leading juvenile, a trim little chap with sweet blue eyes, burst into fits of laughter.

"That is some of your doings," said the lady, trying to look injured, but not succeeding.

"Is it Winkles again?" asked Miss Winters; and the lady nodding ruefully, they all laughed, while Miss Winters explained to Mildred that once Mrs. Blossomedoff had been pursued by an admirer who had sent her several of his photographs with as many bouquets. She had thrown the pictures away, but they had been seized by the company, who were continually surprising her with them. A friend had taken one to Europe for the mere pleasure of sending it back to her. She was never safe from them. She would find one in the book she was reading, in her shoes, on the bureau of a new dressing-room; but she was too good-natured to destroy them, she only threw them away, and somebody always rescued them

When it was time for the evening performance, Mildred was given a front seat to watch the play. The house was well filled, and she listened eagerly to the comments of the people about her upon the actors, as she sat there alone in the crowd; but she did not feel in the least lonely. The play was very good, and occasionally the performers smiled down upon her, and she felt as if they were old friends.

Sunday was passed partly in packing, travelling and unpacking, as the company played the next night in Canandaigua; but the two girls spent much of the day together tightening the slack strands of their friendship in talking over the dear past. Cissie asked after every old friend, man and beast, on the farms, and then told over the triumphs and hardships of her career. She seemed to have a great deal to tell; while the two years' work in the hospital, with its real tragedies, was so distant and impersonal to Mildred that for the moment she could say little about it.

The blue-eyed juvenile appeared charmed with Mildred, and at every opportunity would slip into a seat near her in the cars and pour out a mixture of funny stories and boyish compliments, but with such evident feelings of good-fellowship and frank admiration withal that he quite won the girl's heart.

"You must come on the stage and supe it, Monday night," he declared. "You will find it no end of a lark. Come, now, say you will." And Mildred promised she would think it over.

There were a number of other passengers on the train, but the company seemed to pervade it and overshadow all the other travellers, who regarded them with undisguised curiosity. It made Mildred smile to hear herself pointed out in an undertone as one of the dancers. She thought how surprised they would be if they could see her as she had been just a few nights ago in the hospital uniform hard at work, utterly ignorant of this rambling life that her dear Cissie had adopted.

Monday evening she did go on as part of the "Garden Party," Cissie lending her a sweet little muslin for the occasion, and pinking her cheeks till they were more like poppies than roses. She felt quite nervous when she was finally on the stage, although no one in Canandaigua had ever laid eyes on her before. Ridiculously nervous, she argued with herself, and that no one would notice her anyway; but when it was time to laugh with the others, she felt her smile very wooden, and she could not utter a sound.

While the play was going on she was perfectly amazed to hear the company conversing with each other in an ordinary tone of conversation, and the principals even guying each other when an opportunity offered. It seemed as if the audience must notice it, but apparently it did not; and when the curtain came down amidst ringing applause she felt quite a thrill of excitement, and forgot all her nervousness watching Cissie standing, the center of admiration, smiling the dear, winning smile of old in thanks for the appreciation of her work.

When she reached the hotel that night she found a telegram awaiting her from Doctor Bunt. He had a case for her under one of the smartest physicians, in every sense of the word, in New York, and he advised her to hurry back immediately. She left by the earliest train in the morning, saying good-bye to the sleepy Cissie in the half light of the dawn, but finding the juvenile faithfully waiting to carry her grip to the station, with quite a touching tenderness in his sweet blue eyes as he put her on the train and said farewell.

"I think," said he, "if the managers weren't all brutes, they would send a trained nurse out with every company on the road, for somebody is always getting hurt, and you would just fill the bill for us."

Mildred laughed gayly and thanked him for all his kindness, begging him to get off before the train started; but he lingered until the last moment, and then swung himself off while the train was moving, recklessly braving an accident.

CHAPTER II.

As in the army and navy, the trained nurse must pass muster physically as to her suitableness for the work she has chosen. We are told she must have a fair constitution, endurance, and no deformity should be allowed, and that "the personality of the nurse is a most important factor." Of course, she must have brains; and we find magnetism tells for success in the sick-room as well as on the stage.

Mildred's cool head, warm heart and gentle ways brought her continuous work. She headed the list of valuable nurses for more than one celebrated physician, and in many of the houses where she entered and brought hope and comfort she was regarded as a precious friend. She had been South for a short visit in the summer, and enjoyed it; but she did not regret going back to work, though there seemed to be the prospect of selling a large tract of land to a syndicate for sheep-raising, which would put the family quite beyond need.

Her father urged her to give up work, now that the outlook had brightened, but she declined until the sale should be an accomplished fact.

It was a year since she had graduated, and she was perfectly used to the life, keeping house, between cases, with a girl friend who had come North to study art, and with whom she had furnished a couple of little rooms to carry on their joint housekeeping in.

One night, when the two girls were cozily settled for an evening's read together, there came to the door a messenger, with the following note for Mildred:

> MY DEAR MISS OWEN:
>
> Will you go as quickly as you can to the Verona Apartments? Ask for Mrs. Dwight. A typhoid case—her son. I will be there this evening.
>
> LEONARD BUNT.

The messenger was the doctor's own man. "I have a coupé at the door, Miss," he said, "and will wait till you are ready."

She gave a little sigh of regret. She would have been glad of a day or two more of rest, as she had just finished with another case; but she answered cheerfully that she would be ready in a moment, and hurriedly prepared for her departure.

It took her scarcely five minutes. She had adopted somewhat the Fire Department methods. Everything was arranged so that she could start with a supply of all she should need for several weeks, at a moment's notice, when the order came to be off and help put out the fires of fever and disease.

She found the Verona, a bachelor apartment-house, quite a superb affair; but when she entered that of the sick man, she forgot the surroundings in pity for the fussy, nervous little woman who met her.

"You are the nurse from Doctor Bunt?" she asked. Mildred assented.

"I am so glad you have come," said the little woman, her face working painfully. "Ernest is so ill, so very ill!" and she burst into tears.

It only took the nurse a minute or so to don her pale-blue uniform, with its dainty white kerchief, cuffs and apron, and then she entered the sick-room, where she found the stricken young giant moaning with fever and the little mother sitting helplessly beside him. Mildred went up to him and put a cool hand on his forehead.

"How do you feel?" she said. "Very hot and uncomfortable, don't you?"

He opened a pair of brilliant eyes at her, nodded, and then shut them again. After the doctor had been there, and she had carefully noted his instructions and started a record of the patient's pulse, temperature, medicine and such like, his bed was made over in true hospital style, and his fever brought down by sponging.

He scarcely realized what was being done for him; only a sense of comfort crept over him; and while his mother stood anxiously watching the skilled hands, he stopped moaning and went to sleep.

The case was not all plain sailing, though. There were days of high fever and delirium, gradually followed by weakness and an alarming fall of temperature; days of anxious watching, when the heart sickened with fear; but Ernest Dwight was destined to get well.

When the danger was really past, the little household seemed to have time to breathe again, and to smile, too. With the relief from worry in the watchers and suffering in the patient, the laughter and brightness of life crept back into the apartment.

They were merry over everything—the ravenous appetite of the convalescent, who vowed they were starving him; the notes that he had to have read to him, the flowers that had to be kept in the drawing-room, the books, down-pillows, jellies, and fruit that were sent to him.

It seemed to Mrs. Dwight that nothing would ever be too much for her to do for Mildred, who had sustained her and kept up her fainting courage; never once in all these weeks had the girl spared herself, snatching a few minutes' sleep while the patient slept, using heart and brain to work with night and day; and this shared trial seemed to have made a tie almost as of mother and daughter between them.

Sometimes, indeed, the mother felt a twinge of jealousy at her boy's evident preference that Mildred should do everything for him; but he told her he wished to spare her, and she could see for herself how much more deft were the girl's hands than her own.

At last he could sit up; he believed he could walk to the arm-chair that had been prepared for him, but he would have fallen if Mildred had not caught him and lifted him bodily into the chair. He laughed a little faintly, and was glad to be fanned and to have her bring him the whisky and milk.

The girl's duties changed now; she had to read to him and amuse him, but watch him still that he did not overdo. Sometimes he would weary of the reading and make her talk to him, and she would drone on with her soft Southern accent, of which he made no end of fun, and tell him stories of the old Virginia life, being quite frank about their poverty, and equally frank in her family pride.

He had spent most of his life in athletic pursuits, and had never known what the companionship of a charming woman for days at a time could mean; so, naturally, he gradually fell in love with her; and, far from considering her working for a living as a drawback, he admired her pluck, and delighted in her absolute frankness in regard to herself. He felt there was not a cranny in the girl's heart or life that she was not willing for the sunlight of truth to pour in upon, and every day that she spent with him his love grew as his strength increased.

He was beginning to receive visitors now, one at a time, and Mildred would leave him to entertain his guests, only appearing with his medicine or the meals that she always prepared for him. Tom Gregory was calling one day when she made one of these appearances, and Mrs. Dwight, being in the room, detained her a moment, presenting him to her, speaking affectionately of her when she had withdrawn, and dilating on her remarkable abilities as a nurse.

"I have seen her before," Tom said, thoughtfully. "Now, where was it? I can't seem to place her." Then they talked of other things, till suddenly Tom broke off, "Why, I have it! She was one of the 'Boston Gayeties.' I saw them play in Canandaigua last year."

"Nonsense, old man!" said Ernest. "She has been nursing a year, and just before that came out of the hospital."

"It's not nonsense at all. I remember her perfectly. I saw her in the chorus of the 'Gayeties' in Canandaigua, and, what is more, I travelled the day before in the same train with them from Elmira to Canandaigua, and watched her particularly, for she seemed to be sweet on a little chap in the company who was with her all the time."

Ernest turned quite pale. There must be some mistake, he thought. Was it possible that her charming frankness could have been all assumed? He leaned his head wearily back against the cushions, and after a little Tom withdrew, hoping he had not staid long enough to tire him.

"Do you believe it, mother?" he asked.

"Believe what?"

"That Mildred has been on the stage. Not that that would be anything, but it looks as if she wanted to conceal it, never having mentioned it."

Mrs. Dwight regarded her son curiously, and decided the time had come when she could dispense with a nurse and take upon herself her duties until her boy was well again.

She told Mildred late that day that as her week would end on Thursday, two days later, she had decided that she herself could do all that Ernest needed; and the sudden sinking of the girl's heart proved to Mildred what she had been afraid to ask herself.

His mother rather feared to tell Ernest what she had done, but when she plucked up the courage to do so, he assented wearily with a "Just as you think best," and the matter was settled.

For the next two days a restraint was felt by each of the three who had been so closely drawn together. Again and again Ernest tried to ask Mildred some question that would clear away the torturing doubts that filled him, but he was still so weak he had not the courage, and the days went and she came to say good-bye.

There were tears in the mother's eyes at the last moment, and she felt something like remorse, although she could not see why she should.

"You must always regard us as friends," she said. "I feel that I can never repay you for all you have done."

"Have you given mother your address?" he asked. "I am not going to say good-bye, you know!"

"Doctor Bunt has it," she answered; and then suddenly turned, with swimming eyes, and went away.

Something had happened, she felt sure, to change their regard for her, but she was powerless to ask what it was.

"I am all tired out," she owned to the little artist friend that night, with the tears again in her eyes. "I should like to go home for awhile and get toned up!"

And she looked so pale and tired that the little friend tucked her tenderly in bed, and made her a nice cup of tea, and petted her until she felt somewhat comforted.

Even a nurse is grateful for a bit of coddling at times.

CHAPTER III.

Mildred did go home, not only to be toned up, but to stay. The sale of the land was made. The syndicate would have taken all they had, but they declined to let the house-garden and orchard go, the sale of the rest giving them all they needed on which to live luxuriously; for living is not high in that land, which repays all effort so liberally.

With its bettered fortunes, the house resumed somewhat of its old-time air, and threw wide again its hospitable doors, which only the bleak wind of poverty had blown to for a while. The girl had gone home a week after her return from the Dwights', and the joy and rest of being at home once more helped her to bear the dull pain that had come in her heart in those two last days she had been with them.

It was May; two months had passed; and she still looked a little tired, a little thin, but the free, out-door life she was leading was mending that every day. In all this time she had never heard from Ernest, and she wondered whether he had grown quite strong, and whether he could have quite forgotten her.

His recovery had been more slow after she had left. Often his mother regretted her hasty dismissal of the girl who had been such a comfort to her in her need. The waiting on Ernest taxed her strength, too; and the dishes she had prepared to tempt his suddenly vanished appetite never seemed quite right.

But slowly he grew stronger, and when at last he was able to go out, she left his bachelor quarters to go to her own home farther uptown. He called on her dutifully every other day, but he would leave her so worried and distressed that he did not seem like his old self.

He had asked the doctor for Mildred's address, but he had it a month before he sought her out. She had been a great disappointment to him. He had found her frankness one of her chief charms; and then, strangely enough, this proof had come to him that it was all quite on the surface, or she would not have so carefully concealed what must have been a very interesting part of her career as a professional in one line and another; and this thought threw doubt on all else she had told him.

He had questioned Tom Gregory again; but Tom was unshakable in his asseverations that he had seen her in the chorus of the "Boston Gayeties," and had watched her on the train in a violent flirtation with another member of the company. The strain of his long illness had rendered him over-sensitive, and he missed her, and brooded over it and railed to himself at the deceitfulness of woman, until a vision of the girl's gentle face and honest eyes would come to him, and he would ask himself what right he had, anyway, to condemn her because she had not chosen to confide in him her entire past; and he would give himself up to a dream of this vision that tormented him.

One day he determined to find her. He started out, the blood flowing vigorously in his veins. His old strength of body and purpose seemed to have come back to him, and as he drew nearer and nearer to where he might find her, his nerves tingled with the joy of living and the thought of a great coming happiness.

He dashed up the steps of the house when he found it, rang the bell under the two cards, "Miss Owen, Trained Nurse," "Miss Augusta Seymour, Miniature Painter," in the vestibule, and the front door mysteriously unlatched.

He sprang up the first flight of steps; it winded him a little. He knew the rooms were at the top of the house, and he took the next flight more soberly, but the two remaining ones he found positively painful. He was not quite his old strong self yet.

Plucky little woman, he thought, to work and seem happy in such a home as this, away from all you love and who love you. When you can't fly, you ought to have a nest on a lower branch than this.

He stopped, panting, in front of the door at the head of the stairs, and knocked. A girl about twenty-five opened the door. She was small but sturdy, and enveloped from head to heels in a large gray apron, touched up with grayer colors, evidently put on with a brush.

"Miss Owen?" said Dwight.

"Miss Owen is not here any more," she answered, surveying him carefully.

"Not here?" he gasped. "But—but where has she gone?"

"Down South—home."

"When did she go?" he asked anxiously. "She was not ill, was she?"

"Half sick," the girl answered, a little curiously. "She had been nursing a case of typhoid for six weeks, and some people, you know, have no mercy on a nurse. They don't remember she is human, if they are ill, but keep her at it day and night, without air or sleep; and she is bound to break down, if it goes on long enough." The young fellow, who looked in exuberant health, turned pale, and she relented a little. "She is all right now, though, that is sure."

"But is she not coming back?" he asked. "Excuse me, but I am a—a friend of hers."

"Well, if you are a friend," she said, smiling a little, "you will be glad to hear that she has given up nursing, because she does not need to do it any more. Her people are quite wealthy, through some land they have sold."

"Would you mind giving me her address?" Ernest asked, meekly.

She had kept him standing by the door, but she ushered him in now; and he looked curiously about the little studio, lit by a north window in the sloping roof. There was very little in it, but the Japanese matting, cheap draperies and furniture were in harmony, at least in regard to their color, and it looked a cozy nest after all.

She gave him the address and some clear directions as to the simplest way of reaching it if he should ever be near there; and then, with profuse thanks for her courtesy, he withdrew. It was easier going downstairs, but he went slowly, and ruminated pleasantly.

"She would not have held forth so frankly about the people Mildred had been with if she had known who I was," he soliloquized, smiling as he stepped again into the street; which showed how very little he knew about women, even now when he was convinced that he was desperately in love with one.

He called on his mother that evening.

"I have decided to go South, mother," he said. "I think a week or two at Old Point would do me good, and I shall start to-morrow."

The little lady was overjoyed; she had begged him to try a change of air, but until now he had obstinately refused; and she had not seen him so animated or interested in anything since his illness.

"Do be careful, my darling boy," she said, "and write me all you do, and try to enjoy yourself, dear."

"I will try," he said, and kissed her tenderly good-bye.

He reached Old Point the next evening. The following morning a three-hour sail up the bay brought him to Reed's Wharf, and within a mile's walk of the first gate of the Owen place.

As he stepped on the dock, the contingent of whites and negroes that always met the boat eyed him with interest. Strangers were rare in that small community, where not only every individual was thoroughly known to the rest, but where even the characteristics of the dumb beasts of the field were known; for example, the kicking proclivities of Doctor Quithers's black mare Bessie were universally respected, and every one knew Westley's chestnut filly had worked a quarter in 31¼ seconds that very morning. But Dwight, having been told by Miss Seymour to stick to the road until he came to the store, from where it was but half a mile farther, questioned no one and struck out into this to him unknown country, with a light step and a lighter heart.

He enjoyed every moment of the way; the sun poured down its radiance on the earth, and the green earth smiled in content that the work of the spring was done. They told him at the store to keep on to the right, and on he went, stopping only for a moment in the country road to watch with delight the snail-like progress of an ox-cart in which the driver, a small darkey, lay sound asleep on some meal-bags.

"Here is rest," cried Dwight, "and contentment."

The boy slept peacefully on, and the oxen, with bowed and swaying heads, passed slowly by.

When Dwight reached the house at last, after opening half a dozen gates on the way, a neat-looking colored girl answered his knock.

"I dun t'ink Miss Millie am in de yard, sair; ef yo'll kindly step in, I'll take yo' kyard right dyown thar."

"Which way has she gone? Can I find her?" He looked about the yard, and spying a fluttering cotton gown amidst the cherry bloom some distance away, he asked: "Is that Miss Millie?"

The girl stepped out on the porch, and put up a brown hand to shield her eyes.

"Yes, sair, dat's Miss Millie, sho' enuf."

He did not wait for anything further, but bolted down the steps, and then sharply curbing his impatience, walked leisurely across the lawn. She was breaking off some boughs of the cherry blossoms, and she looked prettier than he had ever seen her. Until this moment she had been to him the sympathetic young nurse whom, in spite of himself, he loved and could not be happy without. Now his manner of regarding her was suddenly transformed. She was the queen of this flower-filled land, and he had had the audacity to come down into the kingdom of this fine old home to judge her, and then, perhaps, to receive her into his manly arms.

"Good morning," he said, speaking as if he had seen her but yesterday.

She turned a startled face, into which the sudden color surged, still holding with both hands the branch she had reached up to break.

"Can't I help you?" he said, breaking the branch and giving it to her. Then they shook hands.

She was surprised, of course, and yet deep in her heart she had felt that some time he would come.

They stood talking awhile under the trees, speaking only the commonplaces of the moment of meeting, and yet when he had taken her hand and looked in her eyes he was content.

He helped her gather up the boughs that lay on the grass.

"The boys scold me for breaking them off," she said, "but I like some of the cherries this way."

She presented him without embarrassment to her mother and father.

"Now," she said to them, "you will believe that I am a good nurse. Mr. Dwight will tell you that the first time I saw him he was very ill and did not look at all as he does to-day."

After their old-fashioned four o'clock dinner, under which the table groaned in the most classic fashion, she asked him if he would drive or sail, they having insisted long before that he should remain for another day or two, and send to Old Point for his man and luggage that night.

He wisely chose a drive, saying he should like her to give him a glimpse of their beautiful country; and so the "kyart" was brought around, and with a small boy running ahead to open the various gates until they should reach the highway, they were off in the golden closing of the day.

He had told her how he had found his way; how much his mother and he had missed her; how anxious he had been when he heard she had been ill—all on his account, too, he added remorsefully.

Their changed relations made a great difference in her. He could scarcely recognize the demure little Puritan in her hospital uniform in the radiant, self-possessed woman beside him, but he was no less in love with her.

She pointed out everything she thought might interest him, though nothing seemed to, except herself, but she cleverly diverted the talk when it verged on a topic she would have termed dangerous. At the top of a small hill she drew in the horse.

"That is Judge Winston's," she said. "You have heard me speak of Celia Winston often."

He nodded; he was scarcely taking in what she said, watching the color come and go in her face.

"It breaks my heart to think of it all," she continued, "but Cissie is so plucky about it, and I do not know what they would do without her."

"Plucky about what?" he asked, his interest slightly awakened. "What a fine old place it is!"

"Yes, is it not? She is on the stage, you know. They were so dreadfully poor. You surely must have heard of her; she goes by the name of Cissie Winters; she is with the 'Boston Gayeties.'"

He started.

"Yes, of course I have, but you never told me you knew her."

"I hardly ever call her by her stage name," she answered; "so perhaps that is the reason, and I never talk of her having to work, because it hurts me to think of it; but she is the bravest, sweetest girl in all the world, and was always just like a sister to me until she went away."

The tears had crept into her eyes, and she had looked away from him.

"Did you ever want to go on the stage?" he asked. His heart was beating violently, awaiting her answer.

She chirruped to the horse in true country fashion, brushed the tears away, and gave a soft little laugh before answering.

"No, I never did, and if I had, the few days I spent with Cissie once would have cured me. Do you know," she opened her eyes very wide as she spoke, "I went on as a 'supe' one night and I was nearly frightened to death. Just think how absurd."

He gave a long sigh of relief.

"What are you sighing for?" she asked.

"I am so absolutely happy," he answered; "but what became of the chap that fell in love with you on that occasion?"

"How do you know that?" She looked at him in astonishment.

"It always happens, doesn't it?" he said, hastily, He was not quite ready to confess yet. "Tell me"—he clasped the hand that held the reins and the horse stopped again, though neither of them noticed it—"tell me, did you care for him or for any one of that long list that must have loved you before I had that blessed fever?"

She smiled very happily at him.

"I never cared for any one," she said, shaking his hand off and touching the horse lightly with the whip.

"Have you ever cared at all?" he asked.

She shook her head.

They drove on in silence for a few minutes, and then she stole a look at him to find his face so mournful and set that she repented.

"I did not say I had never thought of caring for any one," she murmured. A distinction which seemed to satisfy him, for he stooped and kissed the small gloved hand that held the reins.

THE END.

THE DARK STRANGER.*

BY JOHN R. MUSICK,

Author of "*Mysterious Mr. Howard.*"

["THE DARK STRANGER" was commenced in No. 3. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XX—(*Continued*).

IN her distress and perplexity, Hallie had no one to whom she could appeal for advice. Her aunt had shown such an unfriendly spirit toward poor, fugitive Claude that she had come almost to dislike her. Besides, since her father's reported death she had made Hallie's life miserable by constantly reminding her of her dependent condition, and Hallie felt that she could not intrust her secret with her.

Weeks passed, and she had formed no conclusion. At one moment her conscience was racked with the thought that her father was alive and a prisoner, and at the next she was trying to convince herself that the story of his imprisonment was a fabrication.

"But what object could they have in telling such a story to me?" she asked herself, when alone. "Why should Le Clerc write from Nicaragua that my father is alive, and why should his story correspond with the sea captain's? They never saw each other, and they could not have agreed upon such a story. How can it be anything but the truth, unreasonable as it may seem?"

She spent her time hoping, doubting and fearing, until she had worried herself into a fever, and for weeks was under a doctor's care.

At last she was convalescent, and sat by the open window one fine day bathed in the sunlight, while she watched the hurrying throng of people on the street. There is some relief in watching the busy scenes of the street. She saw the postman coming on his usual rounds. He rang the door-bell, and handed several letters to the girl who answered it. A few moments later there came a tap, tap at the door, and to her "Come in," Bridget entered, with a "letthur for you, Miss," and, dropping a courtesy, laid the letter in her lap and went out.

"What! Another letter from Nicaragua?" gasped Hallie, gazing at the postmark. It was addressed in a hand strange to her. With trembling fingers she tore it open, and read the note through with wildly-beating heart and parted lips. Her very soul seemed to bound from her body as she read the missive, which was as follows:

"MISS HALLIE TYLER:

"Pardon me, a total stranger, for writing to you, but I feel sure the reason I have for doing so is sufficient excuse. I am a Californian, and was returning to the States by way of Nicaragua, when I fell in with a young man, formerly of New York, who has been accused of a crime. He is in a house in Greytown, afflicted with a lingering, wasting fever, which must soon end his life, unless his case takes a turn. In his delirium he constantly raves of Hallie Tyler. He says he did not kill his uncle, as charged, but that he is innocent. Oh, if you could hear him imploring you to come to him, and forgive him, surely you would not stay away from his side! I have learned that his real name is Claude Morton, though when he was in California he was known as Isaac S. K. Perkins. I have merely stated these facts to you in the hope that you will act upon them, and come to see one who is dying to see you. If you come to Greytown, I will conduct you to him. Yours truly,

"JACOB METCALF."

"Claude sick—dying!" she gasped, clasping her clenched hand over her heart. "I must go to him—I must—I must—" She was helpless, stunned, and sank, almost fainting, on the sofa.

Claude sick in Nicaragua! She could not doubt the truthfulness of this letter. It corroborated the statement made in Tom Coleman's letter from California. Tom was Claude's friend, and she could not doubt his statement, and the letter from this stranger, Jacob Metcalf, must be true.

She determined to go to Nicaragua. But how? She had no money, and was too proud to ask for any. It would be fatal to Claude for any one to know that he was lying sick in Greytown. Detectives would be sent to bring him back to suffer for a crime of which she knew he must be innocent. How was she to get the money to go to him? If she approached her aunt on the subject, she would tell the police. She knew no one from whom she could borrow a cent. Then she remembered that Fletcher had tendered his services.

"No, no; Claude would rather die than be saved by his money. Oh, Claude! Claude! Must I give you up? must I give you up?" she groaned, burying her face in her hands, and giving way to a flood of tears.

CHAPTER XXI.

GENERAL WALKER.

After Tom had seen Le Clerc at the office of Walker, the General seemed to possess new interest to him. General Walker was a mysterious character. His conduct was such as to arouse suspicion, had there been any one who cared about the relations of the Government to Nicaragua.

The truth was, Walker had never given up his Nicaraguan scheme. He was a man extremely ambitious and daring. He longed to rule, and in Nicaragua saw an opportunity to seize the government. The Nicaraguans were divided among themselves, and Walker saw a golden opportunity for a conquest.

About the first of May, 1855, he sold his interest in the *Placer County Herald*, and the rumor soon spread over the settlement that he was going to leave the country. One day Tom and Claude received a note telling them that General Walker would be pleased to see them at his house. Walker was a bachelor, and lived in a boarding-house, in those days called a tavern. They went, and found the gray-eyed destiny of Nicaragua in his room alone, seated at a table, earn-

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estly looking over a great pile of papers, which he pushed aside on their entrance.

"I have sent for you both to consult with you on a matter which may be greatly to your interest," said the filibuster. "I know you to be young men of discretion, who will keep your own counsel."

"I hope so," Claude answered.

"How would you both like to be rich?"

"It would suit me remarkably well just now that I have been robbed," Tom declared.

"By one bold stroke you may both be wealthy men."

He fixed his keen gray eyes on them as if he would pierce them through. There was deep earnestness in the voice and manner of the speaker, but he was perfectly calm and unenthusiastic, and talked like a man who knew of what he was speaking. After a moment's silence, Claude asked:

"Can you make your meaning more clear?"

"Yes, I have nothing to conceal from you or the world," Walker declared. "I am a lover of the liberties of men, and whenever I have an opportunity to put in practice the doctrines I preach I shall not hesitate to do so. Now you are both aware that I have been called a filibuster, because I wanted to liberate Nicaragua from the most corrupt rule the world has ever known. The charge was wrong. I was the friend of the people. They know it, and have asked me to come back and complete the work I began."

"Are you going?" Claude asked.

"Yes."

"Will not the government authorities interfere with you?"

"No," he answered, with a smile. "I know what I am about. Delegation after delegation from Nicaragua has come to me, and asked me to come and rule their country. They are tired of the domineering of Corral and want freedom."

"Will you become the president or the monarch of the country?" Claude asked.

"I am only going to liberate the people from Corral. When that is done, they shall have it in their power to choose their own government and ruler. But my followers are promised rich coffee plantations, and each can be wealthy in a short time."

"Who among the people of Nicaragua are backing you?" Tom asked.

"Among others is Don Martin Fredrico, one of the wealthiest and most influential merchants in the whole country."

That name alone was sufficient to win Tom to the cause. Walker then proceeded to give a long list of prominent names of men who had joined in a petition for him to return and take charge of affairs.

"Are others backing you?" asked Claude.

"The Vanderbilt Steamship Company is aiding me. Colonel Fry will follow me with a large force. General Henningsen, the Hungarian hero who fought under Kossuth, will be with us. Captain Frank Stuart will have a hundred men ready to follow as soon as we land."

"Will the United States Government permit you to land?" Claude asked.

"I am assured that there will be no opposition to our doing so," Walker answered, with an assurance that seemed to indicate he knew what he was about. "Old Commodore Vanderbilt is about as powerful as the United States. His money buys everything. He wants Nicaragua, so that his ships on the Atlantic and Pacific side may operate to the best advantage."

The Vanderbilt Transportation Company at this time did the chief transfer business between the United States and California. On the Atlantic side there were two vessels plying between the United States and Greytown in Nicaragua. There were two, the *Orizaba* and *Oregon*, plying between San Juan Del Sur and San Francisco. The great rush to California since 1849 had given a wonderful impetus to the steamship travel by the Nicaraguan route. Before Walker began to filibuster, the Nicaraguans had placed an embargo on Vanderbilt's ships, and refused to allow the company to transfer passengers and baggage across the country. This resulted in the bombardment of Greytown by Captain Holland, of the United States sloop-of-war *St. Mary.* Though the Nicaraguans had been forced to submit, Vanderbilt, according to Walker's statement, fearing another interference with his company, determined to overturn the government and place one in power whom he could rely upon.*

It is quite certain that Walker had the full support of the Vanderbilt Steamship Company until he quarreled with them, which was the beginning of his overthrow.

Never were rosy-hued prospects painted with greater skill than was the brilliant career outlined by the great filibuster. He was a very quiet, very earnest man. What he seemed to lack in enthusiasm he more than made up in his sincerity and determination.

He appealed more to their reason than to their emotions. Walker posed as a lover of liberty. He avowed himself an enemy to both monarchy and oligarchy. He declared that the people were supreme, and should rule. He avowed himself an enemy to rulers who were merely tools in the hands of some corporation that ran the government to their own advantage.

"Have you gentlemen ever seen Nicaragua?" he at last asked.

"Yes, sir; we came through there."

"Have you any acquaintances there?"

"We met some people on the way, but they could hardly be called acquaintances," Claude answered. Tom, in his impetuosity, would have told all about Don Martin Fredrico and his pretty daughter had not Claude cautiously laid his hand upon his arm and checked him. "We stopped for awhile at El Castillo Viejo, and met the commandant, General Gomez de Cartabona," added Claude.

"He is one of my stanchest friends and adherents. The General and his whole army will join me. Don Martin Fredrico of Granada will give us the advantage of his wealth and influence. Then we have Señor Miguel Constellino, Don Juan de Leon and a host of well-known names in the country. Never were there more brilliant prospects nor greater assurance of success."

Tom was already won to the cause. Had it not been for Claude he would have volunteered without a moment's delay.

"Now, what do you young gentlemen think of the enterprise?" concluded Walker.

Claude, fearing that Tom's anxiety to see Teresa would cause him to volunteer without taking time to consider the matter, said:

"We will take your proposition under advisement, General."

"How soon can you give me an answer?"

"Do you expect to act at once?"

The General moved uneasily in his seat, and answered:

"N–no, not very soon, but it is well enough to know on whom we can rely."

Claude answered, after a moment's thoughtful silence:

"Did not your contemplated invasion have an appearance of unlawfulness, I should not hesitate for a moment."

"Unlawful! My dear sir, how can an expedition which has for its purpose the liberties of man be unlawful?"

"Our Government cannot sanction your conduct."

General Walker shrugged his shoulders, and answered:

"N–no; yet there is a tacit understanding between me and the United States Government. Our Government would openly indorse my acts if it dared. It would dare do so but for Great Britain. England has always been jealous of our power in the Western Hemisphere, and will oppose any further advancement of our territory."

"But your intended expedition is not to annex the country to ours, or set up a new government?"

"No. It is purely a move in the interest of humanity, and nothing more," Walker declared. "I am making a bold stroke for the liberties of the people."

"We will discuss the matter among ourselves and give you our decision."

They bade General Walker good night and left him, little dreaming under what trying circumstances they would next meet.

"Why did you delay, Claude?" Tom asked, as soon as they were alone. "Why didn't you volunteer at once?"

"There is really no need of such haste, Tom."

"But it must be all right."

"It is a very grave matter, and requires our most careful consideration."

"But General Cartabona is in it."

"So General Walker informs us."

"And Don Martin."

"So he says."

"Then it must be all right."

"Tom, it is sometimes a dangerous matter to go to meddling with the politics of these countries. The people are like the land they inhabit, subject to volcanic irruptions. They may be friends to-day and enemies to-morrow."

"If Teresa's father is for Walker, so am I. You are the last man, Claude, that I would think would hesitate at danger. I always thought you were afraid of nothing."

"Tom, there is one thing a truly brave man is always afraid of."

"What?"

"Of doing wrong. Walker has told us a fair and plausible story, but he may be, intentionally or unintentionally, deceiving us. There is no need to be in great haste. Let us take time and carefully look the ground over before we leap."

"I know it's all right."

"How do you know it's all right, Tom?"

"In her last letter Teresa wrote that the people had grown tired of the present unsettled condition of the country, and that there was a strong rumor of inviting General Walker to come and take control of the government."

"Perhaps the people think so now, but the time may come when they will change their minds. We need be in no haste. Let us learn more of General Walker and the position of our country in this matter. We need not fear the Nicaraguans half as much as we should fear breaking the laws of the United States."

Tom agreed to wait. Claude was still melancholy, as he had been since his uncle's death. Day after day, week after week and month after month glided quickly away, becoming years, and yet the great, dark mystery which seemed to have settled down in one endless night about him showed no signs of giving place to the faintest gleam of hope. It seemed as if his whole life would be passed in that eternal melancholy and gloom which often drives men to suicide. Claude was a Christian, however, and a firm believer that in the next world all wrongs would be righted.

With so little to hope for in this world, had there been none in the next, he would have sought that eternal oblivion which the deists believe death to be. One day he asked Tom why they had never heard from Hallie. Tom, who was sensible in all things save his own love affairs, answered:

"Why, Claude, old boy, one could hardly expect to hear from her."

"Why not?"

"She would not dare write to me."

"From your letter I would think she might."

"No, Claude. Hallie, is a very sensible girl, and would do nothing that could possibly jeopardize you. I wrote that you were in Nicaragua; she knows we are in communication, and if you were in Nicaragua, all a shrewd detective would have to do would be to shadow me and see where my letters went. He could follow them up and find you at the other end. She knows this, therefore she does not write."

Claude regretfully accepted the explanation. Days passed, and the young men were still discussing the Nicaragua matter. Tom left the camp one day and went to the post-office. He received a letter from Teresa, in which she told him there was great excitement and enthusiasm over the report that an army of Californians would soon arrive under Walker and put an end to the internal quarrels. Tom believed, from the tone of her letter, that she was heartily in sympathy with the invasion, and he was so fired with a desire to return to the land of the tropics and the maiden who had won his heart that he resolved to seek Walker and offer his services at once. Hastening to the tavern, he inquired for the General.

"He is not here any more," answered the proprietor.

"Where is he?"

"Well, that's what none of us not in the secret know."

"Do you mean that he has left town?"

"Left California, sir," answered the landlord. "It's my opinion that you will find him several leagues south of Acapulco."

Tom started and exclaimed:

"Great Heaven! I'm too late."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA.

Tom Coleman was correct in his surmises. General Walker had departed for the land which he was to conquer, and upon an expedition which was ultimately to end in his defeat, but which was to make him famous.

Intestine troubles had become virulent in Nicaragua, and the Vanderbilt Steamship Company, coming in for their share of the enmity of the Nicaraguan government, determined to put up no longer with the insults of the people. Vanderbilt had the merchants and intelligence of Nicaragua with him. It was the prejudiced and ignorant who, becoming jealous of the Transportation Company, determined to cripple it in every possible way.

There were speculators also interested in the conquest. Though they took no part openly, they secretly aided and abetted Walker, and secured for him the very best arms and men attainable. Walker, on pretext of lending his sword in support of the Democratic Party in Nicaragua, landed with sixty-two followers at Realjo, June 11, 1855. Here he received some recruits, among whom were one hundred natives. But by far the most valuable recruit was Gen. Charles Fredrick Henningsen, the famous English author and soldier of Scandinavian extraction.

General Henningsen's career was perhaps more like Capt. John Smith's than that of any man with whom he can be compared—though he never met a Pocahontas. In 1834 he entered as a volunteer the service of Don Carlos, the claimant of the Spanish throne. The war in Spain was then at its height, and young Henningsen speedily rose to be captain of Zumalacarregui's bodyguard. On the conclusion of the convention negotiated by Lord Eliot and Colonel Gurwood, he returned to England. He subsequently went back to Spain with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and served with the Carlist forces in many engagements. He was attached to the expedition which marched on Madrid from Aragon, and after the battle of Vilas de los Navarros, he was raised to the rank of colonel, and placed in command of the cavalry. When within three miles of Madrid, he was attacked by the queen's horse in great force, but finally succeeded in breaking the ranks of the enemy. A few days later, he was taken prisoner and released on parole. Next he served in the Russian army in Circassia. From his experience gained there, he wrote a work entitled, "Revelations of Russia," which was published in both English and French.

Next, this adventurer was found in Hungary, fighting under Kossuth for the liberty of the people. After the struggle he visited Kossuth in Asia Minor. He next visited Italy, making an overland journey from Constantinople, passing through Albania and crossing the Adriatic under circumstances of great peril.

General Henningsen had reached the United States when the contest in Nicaragua began to assume serious proportions. The speculators who were backing Walker knew the worth of such a man, and he was urged to join the expedition, which he consented to do if certain conditions were agreed to by Walker. That person readily assented, and on his arrival appointed him major-general in his army. The first meeting between Walker and Henningsen was very cordial. Walker, who was a sagacious man, welcomed General Henningsen with more than his usual warmth.

General Henningsen looked over the slender forces of Walker, and could hardly repress a smile at calling them an army. Aside from the Californians, he did not regard them as capable of long resisting the enemy.

"General Walker, you must not rely on your native soldiers," he said.

"I am assured of their loyalty to our cause."

"The rascals will desert you at the first fire."

"I hope not, but if they do, we will make a stubborn fight with the Californians."

Every day a few recruits joined the invaders, and they grew more enthusiastic. On the 29th of June they had marched as far as Rivas, where they were met by an army of four hundred and eighty Nicaraguans. Walker left the disposition of the troops to Henningsen. He addressed the Californians, exhorting them to maintain the reputation of their race.

"We are going to fight five times our number," said the General. "But you are descended from the Anglo-Saxon race, and I have no fears but that you will acquit yourselves worthy the name of Americans."

There was a cheer, and one man shouted:

"Some o' us war with Taylor at Buena Vista, an' we know how powder smells."

"We will fight greater odds than Taylor did, and if you are as true as his army, victory will be ours. Put no dependence in those natives. They will run at the first fire. I have placed them in front to bring on the engagement in order to get rid of them. The sooner they run and get out of our way, the better." His speech was received with a cheer. At this moment the report of muskets was heard in front. "They are at it," said the General. "Advance to that stone wall and take position there."

The Californians gave vent to a loud cheer and began to advance. For a few moments the firing was quite sharp, and then they saw the native allies stealing away through the bushes, their *scopats* trailing at their sides. The Californians gave vent to loud yells of derision, and shouted to the enemy in front:

"Come on—come on, you niggers, and try us!"

General Corral, the commander of the Nicaraguan forces, was a brave man. He advanced until within gunshot and opened fire. The Nicaraguans were armed with *scopats*, and, though able to load and fire more rapidly than the Americans, their weapons were not nearly so effective. The Mississippi Yager, a rifle made famous during the Mexican war, was the weapon Walker's men were armed with. His Californians were all excellent marksmen, and General Henningsen kept reminding them not to throw away their shots. They drove back the enemy again and again.

General Corral was almost in despair. Though he outnumbered the Americans nearly five to one, they fought more like demons than men. At last Walker fell back, leaving one hundred and eighty of the enemy dead and wounded on the field, while his loss was only two killed and eight wounded. Corral discovered that he could not hold Rivas, so he retired to Virgin Bay, where he began to recruit his army. Walker's victory, for it was considered a victory, so encouraged the Nicaraguans in sympathy with him that they began to flock to his standard. In two weeks' time he had one hundred and twenty native soldiers.

Reinforcements had also been received from California. The troops were all in the best spirits, and anxious to march against Corral, who was concentrating all the forces he could gather at Virgin Bay. General Henningsen, who was a soldier by nature as well by experience, knew full well how important it was to improve the present opportunity. The battle at Rivas had demoralized the enemy, and that advantage should be followed up at once. With their additional forces they marched to Virgin Bay, where General Corral had concentrated nearly six hundred men.

"Can we depend on the natives this time?" Walker asked, as they came in sight of the town, and began to form their forces for the attack.

"Yes," Henningsen answered. "They have confidence in the Californians. They see they are invincible and will not be frightened at the first onset."

Henningsen made a different disposition of the army this time. The Californians were placed in the center, under his immediate command. The natives were divided and placed on the right and left wings, under native leaders, the whole under the command of Walker. The conflict opened with lively skirmishing on the right. The Nicaraguans on both sides sought shelter of trees and stones, from behind which they kept up a continual fire. Henningsen, observing them, reported to Walker:

"Our native soldiers are doing good work, but the enemy are massing on our center, and we may expect a charge on the Californians."

Walker had scarcely read the report when a wild roar from the center drowned everything, and the smoke rolled upward for a moment, concealing the combatants. Walker might have felt some fear for his center had not the cheers of the Californians reached his ears.

"They are covering the ground with yellow-skins," he said, as he watched the conflict through his glass.

The fight was desperate. General Corral led charge after charge against the Californians, but he might as well have dashed his forces against a solid rock. The Californians mowed them down with their rifles until they were almost near enough to use the bayonet; then, dropping their guns, drew revolvers, and opened a still more deadly fire on the reeling columns, which were compelled to recoil before them. The earth was strewn with dead and dying, and the fight still raged.

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*The above statement is from one of Walker's filibusters now living

Henningsen, who had all along been watching for the moment when he might strike a final blow, discovered that the lines of the enemy had begun to waver. The moment had come. Waving his terrible sword above his head, he shouted:

"Charge!"

Yells that appalled the forces of Corral arose from the line of Californians, and, like an irresistible avalanche, they bore down upon the trembling foe. Flesh and blood could not endure the onset any longer, and they broke and fled. The victory and route were complete. Many of the Nicaraguans threw away their arms and ran for their lives, leaving Virgin Bay, a great many stands of arms, military supplies and their dead and wounded in the hands of the invaders. Many who had fought the invaders surrendered to them, and expressed a willingness to assist them in the conquest of the country.

Granada was the main object of the campaign, but Walker was compelled to linger awhile at Virgin Bay and await the arrival of recruits and stores from the United States and interior of the country. One morning a tall, gentlemanly-looking Spaniard, with hair and eyes as dark as midnight, entered the quarters of Walker. He greeted the General in English almost as perfect as that of an Anglo-Saxon.

"This is General Perez, is it not?" asked Walker.

"It is, General. I met you in California, and wanted to induce you to come to Nicaragua. I was to have met you at Realjo, but had some difficulty in getting my forces together."

"Have you come to join us?"

"Certainly, if not too late and you will accept us on our terms."

"What are your terms?"

"We have many enemies in Nicaragua. For a former insurrection we have been outlawed. I have never dared even to own my name."

"Is not your name Perez?"

"No, General."

"You need have no fear of telling me what your name is, for all old things are done away and we shall begin life anew."

"I have been known as Somoza."

"Somoza!" said Walker, staring at him. "I have heard that name. It is said you are a robber."

"They made me a robber. I was declared an outlaw because I sought to liberate my people. I was driven to the mountains with my followers, and called a robber because I never ceased to make war against them."

"And when you came to California to see me you changed your name to Perez?"

"Yes, senor. Somoza was too well known there. But, General, that is nothing either here or there. I have two hundred as valiant and daring fellows as you ever saw, ready to follow you. Will you accept us?"

Walker was sadly in need of men, and he was shrewd enough to see that it was better to have the friendship than the enmity of such men. He accepted them and assigned them a place in his army. General Henningsen opposed taking them.

"No good will come of having such a gang of cutthroats at your heels," he declared.

"We had better have them at our heels than at our throats," argued Walker. "They are desperate fellows, and know they will be hung if taken by their own countrymen. I have accepted them."

"If you don't regret it, I shall be mistaken," replied Henningsen.

Everything being ready, Walker marched against Granada, and on October 15th took possession of it. Don Martin Fredrico, who at one time would have welcomed the Americans, was disgusted to learn that Somoza, the brigand, was an adherent of Walker's and refused to have anything to do with the filibuster, and left the city for Guatemala.

On October 25th Walker concluded a treaty with General Corral, the leader of the antagonistic party, by which a new President was agreed upon, and Corral resigned his command, while Walker, who had refused to be President, was appointed Generalissimo, and agreed to retire to Leon with his forces, which were not to be augmented beyond a hundred men. This did not prevent Walker receiving recruits from both the Atlantic and Pacific sides, so that by March 1, 1856, he had twelve hundred Americans.

Corral was arrested, tried for treason by a court-martial, over which Walker presided, and shot. The war broke out afresh with Costa Rica, but, after several conflicts with varying fortunes, Walker conquered. After this he was, for a few months, in comparative peace. To all intents and purposes, he was ruler of Nicaragua, and might have remained such had not his thirst for power exceeded his capacity as a ruler.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 11.]

◆

FOOLISH TALK.—The conversation of the ignorant is no conversation, and gives even them no pleasure; they tire of their own sterility, and have not matter enough to furnish them with words to keep up a conversation.

IN SEARCH OF GOLD.[*]

BY COLIN MIDDLETON,

Author of "The Fool of Destiny," "Innes of Blairavon," etc.

["IN SEARCH OF GOLD" was commenced in No. 52. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XXI.

A SURPRISE.

LIFE at Gwynne's Creek was hardly ideal. If a community consists of the scum of the earth, leavened by a few broken-down gentlemen, who by habit have fallen into the ways of their associates, it is scarcely likely that that community will behave itself as well, even, as the inhabitants of the Mile End Road.

Gwynne's Creek rarely settled itself down finally to rest until about three in the morning. From nine o'clock, when the first batch of drunkards reeled out of the whisky saloon and sang themselves to sleep in their tent, or in the gutter, until twelve, when the last batch inarticulately swore eternal friendship at the pitch of their voices, sleep was impossible for the small residuum which was not drunk. After midnight the silence was broken at intervals by the sounds of violent quarrels, which ended usually with the thud of blows, followed by ominous silence again. Now and then the report of a pistol rang out, and then there would be groans and the hurrying to and fro of busy feet.

In a newly-formed mining camp justice does not follow inexorably on crime, and it is as well for all to be afflicted with temporary blindness and deafness in certain crises.

Once only had Ivor and Beausire felt bound to interfere. Shortly after the first crushing two women strayed into the camp. They were treated with the utmost respect by the entire community, but, like the rest of their sex, they were not averse to admiration. They took up their quarters at the whisky saloon, as being the only place in the camp which might pass for an hotel. They apparently had strolled into the camp merely to see life, and to do it as cheaply as possible. They were not well dressed, nor were their garments innocent of rents. They brought no luggage, this being an inconvenient luxury in that part of the world.

On the first night of their arrival the behavior of the men was most exemplary. Every one was sober, and they all addressed the women in the most deferential manner. They all took off their hats to them, and one and all fell in love with one or both of them. Some of the men had wives, or had had in the forgotten past, but that was no impediment to the celebration of another wedding. On the second night, the quarrels in the street—if street it could be called—were innumerable, and the sound of blows and of cursing was almost continuous for a couple of hours. On the third night pistol shots were so frequent that one would have thought a skirmish with an enemy was in progress. On the following day three of Ivor's "hands" were incapacitated, and two had disappeared, nor, indeed, were they ever heard of again, though two suspicious-looking mounds which Ivor discovered in the bush might have told a tale.

On that day Courtenay had come down from Castlemaine, and Ivor and Beausire had laid the matter before him.

"Women in the camp? Where are they?" he asked.

"They are lodging in the whisky saloon."

Courtenay did not say another word, but walked down to the whisky saloon, and in half an hour he came out, followed by the women, who took the road toward Vaughan, and were never seen again.

"We can't afford to have women knocking about here until this township comes under somebody's jurisdiction and the law of the land is in force."

He said nothing more, and Ivor and Beausire never knew what arguments Courtenay had used to induce the women to go away. They had not access to his bank-book.

Ivor was thinking over the lawlessness of this strange herd of men as he rode slowly in to Vaughan on the morning after the conversation recorded in the last chapter. There are times when one can offer no explanation whatever to account for the turn of Fortune's wheel. That fickle lady does not smile on the deserving to the detriment of the undeserving, or *vice versa*. She is apparently entirely irresponsible, and makes the most of her privileges. If everything in the world were certain to result exactly in accordance with the laws of cause and effect, life would be no longer worth living. It is well that there are limitations to the discoveries of science. It is the element of uncertainty in every action of our lives which supplies the necessary incentive to live.

Ivor could not help thinking that it was by no merit of his own that he did not occupy the same position as did this lawless crew, over whom he found himself placed. Another day or two spent in fruitless searching for that which he now had in abundance would have placed him in their position.

Would he have sunk to their level? That was the question which he asked himself as he rode along. There were, perhaps, a dozen men working for him who had been brought up in luxury among sweet women, and tender, loving sisters; who had been to public schools, some to Oxford or Cambridge—men who had had all the possible advantages of bringing up, and, with one exception, they had lapsed into the condition of mere animals. It is impossible to imagine oneself in a totally different sphere of life. Outside influence is so often too strong for the bias of character; it is so easy to glide down hill.

It was in thinking thus that Ivor came to the conclusion that a certain responsibility with regard to these men was laid upon him. If chance had put him in the position in which he now found himself, it was his obvious duty to interest himself in the men's welfare. Here was a duty even more pressing than the necessity for acquiring sufficient wealth to enable him to marry Gwen.

He shook up his horse and cantered along into Vaughan.

He was received obsequiously at the bank. All the clerks knew that this was Gwynne of Gwynne's Creek, who was going to be a millionaire before many years were over, and even bank clerks have respect for an actual or a prospective millionaire.

"Is the manager in?"

"Yes, sir; the manager is in."

"Would you be good enough to ask him if he will see me?"

In an instant the clerk came back to say that the manager was disengaged, and would be delighted to see Mr. Gwynne.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Gwynne. I hope the mine is going on well."

"There is nothing wrong with the mine; but I came to speak to you about something which has reference to it."

"You have my attention, Mr. Gwynne."

"Courtenay was saying yesterday that he thought that as there were a good many bushrangers about, it was not very safe to keep any considerable sum of money in the bank here, and that we had better remove our deposit to Castlemaine, and retain only a small current account here for working expenses. I suppose it doesn't matter to you in any way, being a branch from Castlemaine?"

"Not in the least—in fact, what you propose is very wise. It is twenty years since there were any bushrangers about here, but now I have heard of at any rate three separate men. Whether they are working in company or not I don't know, but I, for one, shall be glad to know that my responsibility in case of being 'stuck up' is lessened."

"Very well, then; I should be glad if you would transfer our deposit as soon as possible to Castlemaine."

"Certainly," said the manager, in a doubtful tone of voice. "You have brought in your last crushing, I suppose, Mr. Gwynne?"

"No, we don't crush again till Tuesday; after that we are going to crush oftener, as we don't want the stuff to be lying about longer than necessary."

"Very wise, very wise. Then I suppose that I shall transfer your deposit after next Tuesday?"

"No, now if you please, as soon as you possibly can."

The banker looked anxiously at Ivor as he said: "But you have no deposit at present, Mr. Gwynne."

"What?" roared Ivor, as he bounded off his chair. "There are between six and seven thousand pounds in your hands, sir!"

"Excuse me, Mr. Gwynne, there is nothing at all; you drew the whole of that sum, as you know perfectly well, last Monday."

Ivor stared at the manager in a stupid way, hardly knowing whether to denounce him as a liar and a thief, or to knock him down out of hand. He did neither; he merely said in a quiet voice:

"If this is a joke, sir, it is a very stupid one. I have not been within five miles of Vaughan since last Monday week."

The manager shrugged his shoulders. He was convinced that Ivor was lying, and yet he had always regarded him hitherto as a man of the highest personal character.

"And yet you drew more than six thousand pounds here in this very room in my presence last Monday."

Ivor stared at him in dumb amazement.

"Let me recall the circumstances. You came in here about eleven o'clock last Monday morning, dressed very much as you are now, and said that you—that is, the firm—had decided to buy new machinery at once, and that you were going up to Melbourne on the afternoon train to purchase the machinery; that, as you wanted the machinery at once, and as you were not known in Melbourne, you had determined to pay cash for it, and that you would draw the whole of your deposit for that purpose. I thought it rather a quixotic proceeding, as Courtenay's name is good enough in most places; but as I knew you, I didn't think any more about it. You took the money in notes and a little loose gold, and signed the receipt for it."

Ivor, who during this recital was trying to remember what he had actually done on Monday, now said, in a hoarse voice:

"May I see that receipt?"

"Certainly."

The manager rang the bell and gave some instructions to a clerk, who returned almost immediately.

"Thank you. That will do," said the manager, and the clerk left the room.

With his hand pressed firmly down on one-half of the paper, the manager pointed to the receipt as it lay on his desk.

Ivor scanned it carefully, and then, with a sort of groan, he muttered:

"Oh, Heaven! It's Löwe!"

"I beg your pardon?"

"That signature is a forgery."

"You mean that you have forged your own name?"

"No, no, man; I didn't mean that. What was the man like who signed this?"

"Really, Mr. Gwynne, I don't know if you mean to insult me or not. You must know that you signed it yourself."

Ivor, with a weary sigh, sank into a chair.

"Excuse me," he said, after a time. "I am rather upset. I did *not* sign that receipt, but a man so like me signed it that you are quite justified in your mistake. The man who signed that is a Jew called Löwe, who I thought must have been hanged long ago. I was imprisoned at Kimberley, and only just escaped hanging by a hair's-breadth for a murder which he committed. Beausire knows the story only too well."

The manager, now knowing that the responsibility lay with him, apologized to Ivor, who interrupted him by saying:

"It is I who owe you an apology. It cannot be helped. If I had thought that that scoundrel had not got his deserts long ago, I should possibly have mentioned his existence to you. I thought he was dead."

"We had better avoid any mistake in the future, at any rate, Mr. Gwynne. You have always signed for the firm so far. Hadn't you better alter your signature, or sign the full name of the firm, instead of having this stamp? I have all your three signatures separately, but no signature for the firm."

"Yes, it was foolish to put all this part of the business in my hands."

"It was a very bold stroke on that man Löwe's part. You might have changed your signature. How did he know it?"

"I don't know. We were rather intimate on the steamer on the way out from England, and I dare say he got hold of my signature. He is as cunning as Satan."

"It is a very unpleasant business. Am I to understand, Mr. Gwynne, that I am exonerated from blame?"

"As far as I am concerned, most certainly. I suppose he must have guessed that I had grown my beard. Hang the man! This is the second time he has come across my path. It will be ill for him if he risks a third. I expect he is one of that bushranging gang, and may have seen me over and over again without my knowing it. It is lucky for you, sir, that you made no bones about paying over that money. He could have shot you in your tracks if you had refused; he is as desperate a ruffian as steps the earth."

"I don't think that such a mistake will occur again, Mr. Gwynne."

"No, he is not likely to attempt the same game twice; but I shall be surprised if we don't hear of him again. By the way, you might get some of those notes stopped yet."

"Yes, I shall give instructions at once. I am more troubled than I can express over this business, though I must confess that I don't see how it could have been helped."

"Don't worry about it. It is a great misfortune; but it was nobody's fault."

As Ivor rode back to the camp it suddenly struck him that Courtenay had asked him, some months before, if he had not seen him in Castlemaine, and he had answered quite simply that he had not been in Castlemaine. Courtenay must have seen Löwe. Ivor cursed himself for a fool; but he really thought that Löwe must have long since gone to his account.

It was not pleasant news that Ivor had to tell his partners, but they received it with the utmost equanimity.

Courtenay patted him on the back, and said:

"Never mind, Gwynne, old man. I daresay it was good for us. Perhaps we were getting too greedy. We shall make all that up, and more, in two or three months. There is no mistake about the Rose of Glanwythian."

"I suppose we shall," said Ivor, as he rose to go to bed. "But what annoys me is that that infernal ruffian Löwe is abroad still, and that I am so exactly like the scoundrel."

CHAPTER XXII.

OLD DUNCAN GOES TO HIS ACCOUNT.

Despite the fact that Ivor knew in his own mind that success was assured in the end, this delay was very galling to him. He had hoped to be able to go home and claim Gwen as his bride by the end of a year, and now they had to start again. He seemed always to be starting again; it was nearly two years since he had left England, and now he was only starting. This continual delay was heartbreaking. He chafed against it, and became fretful and short-tempered with the men—so different from the Ivor of six months before, who had a laugh for every one and everything. How he cursed that villain Löwe, who had twice come across his path, and both times had temporarily ruined him. It was hardly likely that he

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would dare to show his face again in a place where he had brought off already one successful *coup.* And yet he was, as Ivor had said to the bank manager—"a desperate ruffian."

Ivor almost wished that he might meet him face to face. He had a long account to square with him, and he would prefer to settle it in person rather than allow it to be settled by the law of the land.

He sighed as he thought that there was very little chance of his ever seeing him again.

With six thousand pounds, supposing that he had managed to get all the notes cashed, he ought to be satisfied for some time to come. Ivor could not understand how he had managed to escape from Africa, seeing that he was surrounded by a cordon of watchful detectives only too eager to bring him to justice.

No, he must give up all hopes of personal revenge, and allow matters to run their natural course. Löwe was probably now on his way to Europe to spend the money which belonged to his victim. However, a career of crime cannot last forever, and there was enough against Löwe, should he ever be caught, to hang him ten times over.

Ivor had to content himself with these reflections on that point, but there was another matter which no amount of reflection could alter.

Gwen had not answered the letter he had written her six months before. He had written again after four months had gone by. He little knew that what he meant to be an acknowledgment of his affection, appeared to the reader cold and commonplace diffidence.

He was a poor lover at best. Women, even in these dull, unromantic days, like their lovers to be ardent. Gwen knew that Ivor was not indifferent to her, and yet he could write in this way. She began to be impatient with him, and finally decided upon a course of action which at least had the effect of making him thoroughly miserable for a long time, and which made him swear by all his gods that he would remain a bachelor for the rest of his life. This determination, however, was frustrated in a way in which he least expected, as we shall see.

In the meantime he was thinking that in three or four weeks at most he must hear from her in answer to his second letter, which he prided himself would bring matters to a crisis and clear away any possible misunderstanding there may have been.

In the meanwhile he worked like a man possessed. Old Duncan was far from well, and on several occasions lately had been unable to attend to his work, and Ivor insisted on doing the work himself. Beausire and Courtenay were not in the least degree cast down by the loss of the six thousand pounds. What was a mere bagatelle like that in comparison with the millions which they were going to make?

They constantly rallied Ivor on his taciturnity, and assured him that as far as they were concerned, they would just as soon have lost the money as have it.

But Ivor was not to be comforted. He blamed himself, in a foolish way, for having been born like such a detestable villain as Löwe, and then, besides, neither Beausire nor Courtenay were in love, and that made all the difference in the world.

The weeks wore on, and still no news came frow Gwen. Ivor became morose, and even Beausire, who was prepared to do anything for him or accept anything from him, confided to Courtenay that "Ivor was deuced hard to get on with these days. I have never seen a man change so much in my life. I shall have to go and find amusement elsewhere."

Beausire, finding that Ivor was rarely now in a mood for talking, or, in fact, for doing anything at all save work like a horse and smoke a great deal more than was good for him, went on two or three occasions into Castlemaine from Saturday to Monday.

At first he came back looking very much bored, and asseverating that nothing in the world would induce him ever to put his nose inside the place again except on business.

Still he went, and on one Monday morning he came back with a fire in his eye and a jauntiness in his gait which were entirely foreign to him.

He was restless all through that week, and on the following Saturday hurried away much earlier than was his wont.

He appeared late on Monday morning, dressed in a way which he had not affected since he had been at Cambridge. Ivor noticed a pearl pin in his tie. He had been shaved very carefully, and his hair was trimmed neatly.

Ivor and Courtenay were standing at the door of the specimen-house as Beausire rode up. Ivor surveyed him critically, and then said:

"What a terrific swell, Beausire! You make me quite ashamed of myself."

Old Courtenay walked around Beausire and looked at him. Then he merely grunted:

"H'mph!"

Beausire colored slightly, and was obviously disconcerted as he answered:

"I see no reason why a fellow should not dress himself respectably, although he is stuck down at the very extreme end of the world."

"Come now, Beausire," said Courtenay, "you can't call this the extreme end of the world when they can turn out a suit like that which you are wearing."

"I quite agree with you, Beausire," said Ivor, "about dressing respectably. I am afraid I have got into very slack habits here."

"Anyhow, I can't work in these clothes," muttered Beausire, as he turned away from the specimen-house and walked away to the dwelling-house.

As he went away Courtenay said to Ivor in a low tone:

"There is no mistake about that. I have seen that sort of thing before. He has all the premonitory symptoms."

"What is it?"

"A woman, of course. There'll be a wedding in this firm before it is very much older."

Ivor sincerely hoped that there might be two, but he did not tell Courtenay; he merely said:

"I am exceedingly glad to hear you say so. It will do Beausire all the good in the world, and she will be a devilish lucky woman."

"You are right there, Gwynne; he is a good soul, and I hope he may get a good wife."

Beausire appeared shortly in his working clothes, and under the subtle influence at which Ivor and Courtenay could only guess, was as merry as he was of old.

This suggestion of Courtenay about Beausire had awakened in Ivor a longing which was almost more than he could bear to hear some news of Gwen.

He had had no answer to his second letter, and it might have come any time during the last two months.

Before the day was over, he had made up his mind to cable to the housekeeper at Glanwythian for news of her. She might be dead. He never saw an English newspaper. Anything might have happened to her.

On the following day he rode into Castlemaine and sent a long reply-paid cable to the housekeeper, and waited all that day for an answer.

None came until the following morning, when this message was handed to him:

"Miss Llewellyn went abroad six months ago for an indefinite period. No letters to be forwarded."

This was comforting. Gwen had, without doubt, thrown him over—if, indeed, she had ever at any time entertained any thoughts save those of friendship for him. It was then that he swore to remain a bachelor all his days.

A certain feeling of repose came over him after this. Anything was better than the state of unrest which he had experienced for the last few months.

When he rode up to the camp in the evening he was met by Beausire, who greeted him with:

"I am awfully glad you've come, Ivor. Old Duncan is in a bad way. Almost immediately after you left yesterday he was taken very bad. We have had the doctor from Vaughan, and got a nurse out last night; but I am afraid the old chap is on his very last legs. He was light-headed all through the night. The doctor says it is chronic alcoholism. Anyhow, he is in a very bad way."

Ivor was much concerned.

"Poor old Duncan! I hope we are not going to lose him. I had had visions of a handsome pension for him, and his last days spent in comfort."

"I am afraid it's too late for that. Will you come up and see him?"

"Of course, at once, as soon as I get my horse put away."

A few minutes afterward Ivor went up to Duncan's little wooden house, which had only been put up three weeks previously.

He was apparently in a state of utter collapse, and his breathing was already becoming painful.

The nurse signed to Ivor to keep silence as she whispered to him:

"I think he is going to get a little sleep, sir."

Even as she spoke old Duncan's eyes opened, and he raised his hands feebly from the coverlet, which Ivor took to mean that he wanted to speak.

He went and sat by the old man's bed, and took his hand.

Duncan, after two or three vain attempts, at last found voice to say:

"Good-bye, sir—good-bye! I want to thank you and the ithers for makin' the last months o' my life happier than any I have spent since I left Scotland."

How faint and far away his voice sounded! Ivor said that he hoped he might live for many a year to come, but old Duncan merely smiled feebly and shook his head.

Ivor thought that the old knotted hand lay very feebly in his own, and as Duncan closed his eyes he thought he was dead. He looked up to the nurse, who came forward quickly.

Duncan's eyes opened again, and he said, quite firmly:

"Ye'll hae a drink for me, my lassie?"

"Yes; I will get you some milk, Mr. M'Alpine," said the nurse, as she turned away.

Duncan, in a tone of contempt, using all his remaining energy, said:

"Mulk! Nae sic trash! Gie me a gill o' whisky! Mulk! When did mulk iver gar ye—think—ye—were—a—king?"

The last words came very slowly, and more and more indistinctly, and when he had finished his jaw dropped almost immediately, and he was dead.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 11.]

WILLFUL PENELOPE.*

BY EFFIE ADELAIDE ROWLANDS,

Author of "A Conqueror of Fate," "Little Kit," "At a Great Co

["WILLFUL PENELOPE" was commenced in No. 48. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XXVIII—*(Continued).*

MADGE knitted her brow, was silent a moment, then jumped up.

"You are right, as you always are, Daisy," she declared, and so ended the conversation.

"No use saying anything to Daisy; she doesn't see things as I do; and then she will tell her husband all about it, and then—well, it would be a pity. My poor little Pen! My dear little Pen! I begin to understand so much now; and to think I have been so jealous of you at times! Why didn't you marry Denis? Any one with eyes in his head must see he adores the ground you walk on! *She* sees it, of course, and she doesn't mean you any good, Pen, my dear. Now, what is her game? After all, she can't do very much," Miss Riley declared, with a feeling of great consolation. "This is not a benighted country, and we don't live in the dark ages; only, somehow, Marcia gets on my nerves. I don't like her; she is tricky, and she is so mad with jealousy and spite there is really no knowing what she will not do. I must keep my eyes open."

The day of the ball came in splendidly; a fine, fresh, almost warm day—a day on which the embryo spring in tree, plant and hedge thrust aside its covering and began to burst into being.

Madge was in wild spirits.

"I feel like the colt one reads of in the Scriptures," she cried, as she danced up and down.

"I don't remember this particular animal," Penelope said, laughing against herself; and it was against herself, for she had a very bad headache, the result of a sleepless night and a tumult of thought.

"Your education has been much neglected!"

"Well," said Pen, with a mischievous touch that would come, "perhaps a knowledge of the Scriptures does not come amiss in case one's future lot lies in the direction of a vicar's wife—"

Madge swept down upon her.

"Pen!" she cried, crimson, yet delighted; then swiftly, wistfully: "You—you don't mind, Pen dear—if—if—"

"Madge, how could you think such a thing! Once on a time Mr. De Burgh had a foolish moment. It is a long time ago. He has forgotten it; I have done the same. I will confess to you, Madge, dear, I did not think of it very long. I—I had other things in my mind."

Madge looked at her for a moment as though she would say something, but she checked whatever wish she had, and contented herself with frowning deeply.

"Dear old Uncle George will arrive this afternoon, I hope," Pen said, by and by.

"I am glad of it, for you want a tonic very badly," Madge declared in her most severe manner, and then she laughed. "Just fancy Doctor Westfall dancing!"

"I expect he dances beautifully," Penelope said, valiant for her dear old friend.

As the afternoon wore on, Pen's headache grew worse, and she was about to go to her own room to rest awhile when the sound of wheels came to her ears, and Downs announced "Mrs. Latimar."

"I have come for a cup of tea!" Marcia said, as her cousin greeted her. "Such a lovely day! I enjoyed the drive."

Penelope gave her a warm welcome, and tea was brought accordingly

"Lady Susan would have come too, but she has visitors, and Denis has gone for a long ride, so I am alone."

Madge sat and watched Marcia carefully.

"I don't understand her," was the one thought that came into her mind. Any one knowing nothing of the persons present would have been favorably impressed by the elegant, pale, dark-eyed woman who was bent on making herself so agreeable; but Madge Riley had good reason for doubting Mrs. Latimar only too well.

She withdrew after awhile and left the cousins together, but barely a quarter of an hour had gone when she heard Penelope's voice in agitated tones speaking to Kate outside her door.

"What is it, Pen?" she asked, hurriedly. Penelope explained.

"Oh, Madge, dear, I am so glad you are here. I was afraid you had gone out. Marcia has had an accident. She wanted to see over the house, and she tripped over the curtain and fell very sharply. I am afraid she is badly hurt. I am sending for a doctor—she seems to be in great pain in her foot!"

"A sprain, of course!" Madge declared, and she ran down hastily with Penelope. Marcia was leaning back in a chair, deadly pale, and with an evident look of suffering on her face. All Madge's objections melted before that look, and she vied with Pen in doing all she could to alleviate the suffering.

Marcia was very quiet.

"No ball for me. I doubt if even I ca back to Lady Susan's. How very stupi me; but the fact is I am not very strong am afraid, Penelope, I shall have to c your hospitality for a little while!"

Pen was full of eagerness and anxiety.

"You shall not move till you are bet the house is yours, Marcia, and I will d in my power to make you better!"

When she was alone for one moment Ma glanced sharply about her and set her te in a peculiar smile.

"It was a clever move, and it works v better than I had thought. She can't esc me now, try as she will."

CHAPTER XXIX.

The local doctor was brought as quick as possible to Mrs. Latimar's assistance, a a message was sent to Lady Susan to quaint her with the news of Marcia's grettable accident, and with the fact that all probability the invalid would have remain at Thicket Croft at least for night.

Penelope was deeply concerned about cousin.

"If only Uncle George could be here an earlier train!" she said to Madge.

For the local doctor had seemed not qu to understand Mrs. Latimar's case. It w not an ordinary sprain evidently, there w no swelling, no discoloration; yet, if Mar so much as attempted to put her foot to t ground, she declared the agony to be ins portable.

Doctor Gregory was much perturbed abo the matter.

"I confess, Miss Desborough," he said Penelope, "I cannot say what is wrong; t ankle is certainly all right. I am afrai from the vigor of the pain, that Mrs. La mar must have managed to severely inju one of the tendons of the leg. I have put bandage round the part that seems to hu her most, and I will send a lotion. I shou advise that she does not attempt to mov rest is the one essential thing in acciden like this."

"It is funny he cannot give it a name Madge said, when Penelope repeated wh the young doctor had remarked; "but h looks very shy, and I daresay Mrs. Latim managed to frighten him just a little."

"I am dreadfully worried about it," P nelope said, and in truth she looked trouble "Marcia is so very delicate, you know Madgie."

"Is she?"

Miss Riley put the question rather skeptically; as a matter of fact, she did not sympathize very much with Marcia's muc talked-of health.

"A pity," she observed, coolly, "she di not take Doctor Westall's advice and g abroad; then she would not have falle down and broken her nose or her knee."

Penelope could not help laughing; bu Madge's very clearly expressed dislike t Marcia gave her a little pain, more especially now that her cousin was under her roof and enduring such apparent suffering.

"Dear Madge!" she said, protestingly.

"Dear Pen!" she was answered.

"I don't want you to be unjust or unkind Madgie."

"I flatter myself I am never unjust and rarely unkind, my Pen."

"Not sometimes?"

"Never!"

Pen paused.

"But, Madge, it is unkind to be unsympathetic about the sufferings of others."

"Bosh! I don't mean bosh to the sufferings of others, Pen. I mean it only for Marcia. Now," Madge threw a piece of biscuit to each of her dogs, "now I suppose you will have a fit if I say it is my honest opinion Mrs. Denis Latimar could walk to the road beyond at this present moment as well as either you or I!"

"But, Madge," Pen's color rose, "you really do go too far," she said, and she spoke a little coldly now. "Your antagonism makes you say very wrong things. Why should you suggest that Marcia is shamming an accident, when any one can see she is in great pain?"

"I did not see her fall!" Miss Riley observed, with a curiously stubborn air.

Pen looked at her friend for a moment without speaking, and Madge regarded her with tender admiration.

"I think you are prettiest when you are angry, Pen," she said, casually. "Your eyes are simply the most beautiful things I have ever seen."

Penelope evaded this compliment.

"I am sure you would not say that sort of thing if you knew how you hurt me, Madge," she said, gravely.

"My dear"—Madge purposely misunderstood her—"you cannot expect me to be dumb and blind. You are pretty, and—"

"I did not mean that!" Penelope cried, hurriedly. "You know I did not!"

Miss Riley kept her two pets in a state of anxious expectation for a few seconds, then threw them another and final installment of biscuit.

"I won't say another thing to vex you, Pen, I give you my promise," she said,

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frankly, as she rose and brushed some crumbs from her gown.

"Ah! But will you promise not to think of them?" Pen asked, a little wistfully. She was anxiously expecting an arrival from Lady Susan's. Of course, it would be Denis who would come; he was sure to be a little alarmed. No doubt her messenger had exaggerated matters. She could only hope Lady Susan had not been upset by the news.

"I must go back to Marcia," she said, hurriedly. Mrs. Latimar had been carried upstairs to a bedroom, and Mrs. Warriner was attempting to administer sympathy and consolation. "Madge, will you stay here, and when Denis comes, will you send up and let me know?"

Just as Penelope was turning to leave the hall, one of the servants brought her a telegram.

"Oh, how sorry I am! It is from Uncle George; he cannot come; old Mrs. Langridge is very ill."

Madge Riley was most emphatic in her regret.

"I am more than sorry," she said. "How tiresome Mrs. Langridge always is! I am sure Doctor Westall would have soon set Mrs. Denis to rights, and relieved you of all anxiety."

"This is a disappointment!" Penelope said to herself with a sigh, as she went upstairs slowly—somehow she had dwelt very much on this approaching visit of her old friend. He had always an excellent effect on her nervous system—freshened her up, as it were—dispelling a hundred and one little feelings that were apt to gather about her heart in her many hours of solitude; and then, during the last part of the afternoon, she had desired a more practical need of him. She was afraid that Marcia might have given herself some secret twist or strain which did not show clearly at the first, but might be attended with serious results. Doctor Gregory was a nice young man, but he was young and very shy, as Madge had said, and did not inspire great confidence.

"I shall ask Denis to telegraph to town for some one, since Uncle George cannot come," she mused on. "I am afraid Doctor Gregory does not quite understand what is wrong."

A perfectly true theory. Poor Doctor Gregory had driven to his home rather depressed.

He was by no means an inferior medical man—in fact, he was extremely clever; but Mrs. Latimar's case puzzled him, and he felt he had not covered himself with glory on this the first occasion of his visit to Thicket Croft.

It would have argued an even greater amount of brain and scientific knowledge than he already possessed could Philip Gregory have determined the actual seat of the mischief resulting from Marcia's fall.

He was nearest to the solution when he said to himself, angrily, that he did not believe that Mrs. Latimar had hurt herself in the very least; but that, of course, was a view of the case he considered politic to keep entirely to himself.

Penelope found her cousin in a resigned frame of mind. Marcia was in a big chair, with her right foot stretched out before her. She had taken off her small mantle and hat, and there was a pale, worn look on her face; her expression in all save her eyes was one of utter weariness. The eyes, however, were very restless.

It struck Mrs. Warriner once or twice that she found Marcia's eyes to be exceedingly unpleasant; they had such a shifty way of evading her gaze, and there were fleeting expressions in them which gave her a sense of uneasiness, though not quite to be explained or comprehended. Vague reminiscences of having heard Marcia called "odd" round about Latimar Court flitted through Mrs. Warriner's mind, and aroused within her a sentiment that shared in this opinion.

There was decidedly something odd altogether about this young old-looking woman with pinched, drawn mouth and hot, restless eyes. She was so changed from the Marcia Rochdale of a year ago.

"She gives me a sort of creepy sensation," Mrs. Warriner declared to her sister when she went downstairs, leaving Penelope alone with her cousin. "I don't like her, and yet I am sorry for her, Madge."

"For Heaven's sake, why? Sorry! What have you to be sorry about? A woman who has everything in this world to make her happy, and who deliberately chooses to be miserable simply by encouraging her vile temper and giving vent to her detestable nature! I cannot see where any pity is required for Marcia Latimar; she is a poor, mean thing. My pity is all for Denis. What a horrible mistake he made!"

Mrs. Warriner always smiled at her sister's vehemence, though she felt Madge had a fault of speaking too plainly at times, and, like Penelope, she could not quite go with her sister in her frank utterance of contempt and dislike for Marcia.

"I know you don't like her, Madge," she said, "and I know she has been very rude to you; but all the same, that does not alter my feeling. I am sorry for Marcia. One must pity a woman for wrecking her own chances of happiness so willfully, and, after all, perhaps it is not her fault. She has a bad temper. We are none of us born perfect."

Miss Riley listened to these remarks calmly.

"You have a right to your opinion, Daisy, of course, and I have a right to mine, and as far as it concerns Marcia I don't think it is likely to change very much. I know we are none of us born perfect; we have all got some big fault and blemish, but most of us try to tackle it and get it under. Marcia might easily curb her temper and subdue her insane jealousy if she liked, but instead she does nothing but encourage it and make herself a burden to every one around her. I detest jealousy and suspicion!" Madge finished firmly, "and I tell you frankly, Daisy, if she were my wife I should just bang her over her head and leave her to herself to recover."

"You give yourself a desperate character," laughed Mrs. Warriner. "I only hope you will not carry out such drastic treatment with the unfortunate individual fate has chosen for your husband."

Madge blushed rosy red.

"My husband, if ever I have one, will, I trust devoutly, never give me an opportunity of exercising my strength in such a manner; but listen! there is a carriage—it must be Denis. I promised Pen I would let her know when he came; let us go and meet him."

It was not Denis, however, but Lady Susan herself, and alone.

She was apparently greatly perturbed about the accident, but any one knowing her well would have easily seen that she had something else on her mind as well.

She listened to Mrs. Warriner's account of everything in silence for a moment; then she frowned.

"I hope it is nothing serious. I don't understand why young Gregory could not give her all the medical aid she requires. He is a clever young man and holds a good position in his profession."

"Penelope thought Mr. Latimar would in all probability telegraph for some one from London."

Lady Susan's frown deepened almost into a line of pain as Mrs. Warriner spoke.

"Denis will no doubt do so if he finds it necessary," she said, and then she rose to go upstairs.

Penelope, warned of her arrival, came flying down to greet her. She was glad to feel Lady Susan's arms put tenderly about her, and to respond to her dear friend's greeting. She was full of anxiety lest the old lady had been troubled by the news.

"I hope there is nothing very wrong," she said, as she led Lady Susan into her own room. "She certainly seems to be in less pain. How good of you to come, dear Lady Sue. I do hope you are not upset at all."

Lady Susan sat down in one of the many chintz-covered chairs that were scattered about in Penelope's dainty bedroom.

"I am very much upset," the old lady said, in an abrupt manner, very unlike her usual, sweet, gentle way. "Penelope, I am very much upset, indeed, my dear!"

Penelope knelt down beside her and took the small, withered hands in hers.

"I was afraid of this," she said, sorrowfully. "I wanted to see David before he rode over to you. Servants always exaggerate."

"I am not speaking of the accident," Lady Susan broke in quickly. "I don't think, from all I have heard from Mrs. Warriner, that there is really any cause for anxiety, and I have great faith in Philip Gregory. You may depend upon it if he could not find anything radically wrong that there is nothing radically wrong to find. No," Lady Susan drew a sharp breath, "I am troubled on a far more serious subject." She paused a moment, and then said, almost curtly: "They had a most terrible quarrel to-day. I don't know what happened. I was in the conservatory with William looking over my flowers. I heard her voice sounding all that way from her room. It was horrible, Pen. I have never experienced anything more painful. My life has had sorrows, but I have never known such a sorrow as must live in my poor Denis's heart at this moment!"

Penelope turned very pale, and her hands, holding Lady Susan's, grew suddenly cold. She could not speak. Lady Susan was too deeply impressed and agitated herself to notice the girl's ashen face and anguished expression.

"The servants were all horrified. Shorten was upstairs in my room at the time, and heard every word. She came to me as white as a ghost. I had to speak quite sharply to her, for she would persist in saying Mrs. Denis was a madwoman and would do us all some mischief. As you say, servants always exaggerate; but, upon my word, Pen, I can liken Marcia's conduct to nothing less than the conduct of a madwoman! As soon as Shorten came to me I went back to the house; I felt I must go to her; but evidently the fury was over, for I heard no sound, and as I went in I met Denis on the stairs."

Lady Susan stopped abruptly for an instant. Her voice was unsteady when she went on speaking.

"I have seen many painful sights, my child, but none that have given me greater pain than the sight of Denis's face as he stood before me. His voice was quite husky, and he looked like a man who had gazed on some horrible thing, something that had touched the core of his heart and brought immeasurable suffering. I put my hand out to him in silence, and he held it in silence for a moment, then he tried to say something, to make an apology. Of course, I would not hear it, Pen. I had only to look into his eyes to read the misery he was feeling. He told me he should go out and have a long walk.

"'I may not be in until dinner-time; will you forgive me?' he said, as he was turning away. I called him back, Pen, and kissed him and gave him a blessing. I would have said something comforting if I had known what to say, but what comfort could I offer? I watched him go through the doorway, and my heart bled for him. I know the Latimar pride, and I could not help feeling grateful that his mother was not alive to know shame as well as sorrow."

Lady Susan passed a hand hurriedly over her eyes; tears were rolling down her cheeks. Penelope had risen and was standing a little behind her. She had not uttered a single word. There was such an indescribable agony in her throat she could not have spoken even to save her life.

The old lady could not see her or notice her strange demeanor, fortunately, for had she done so she must have gathered a little of the truth, and her trouble would have been increased a hundredfold immediately. Despite her sharply-spoken reprimand to her servant Shorten, Lady Susan did not feel comfortable about Marcia. It seemed to her that there must be some terrible cause for such an outburst of wild, frenzied anger as had come to her ears. No sane woman could have conducted herself in such a way, was her firm opinion.

Her horror, and, it must be owned, her newly-born fear of Denis's strange wife, would, therefore, have increased beyond all description could she have been led to associate Penelope in the slightest way with Marcia's jealousy.

A glance at the girl's face must have aroused some suspicion of the truth that Denis was closer, dearer to Penelope than life itself; and although Lady Susan would have had no ground for imagining that the quarrel of this day had any connection with her child (as Penelope herself did not for one instant imagine it), she would most naturally have dreaded future possibilities.

"Who knows what such a fury might not do?" the old lady had thought to herself as she had been driven over to Thicket Croft. "In one of these fits of blind passion she must be absolutely uncontrollable. Oh, dear! to think such a terrible scene should have been played under my roof! To remember that boy's agonized face! To realize his future life with such a woman!"

She said all this out loud to Penelope. She was so unhinged and excited, she talked on very quickly, thus giving Penelope time to collect her senses and gather her forces; and there was another blow in store for the girl. Every word Lady Susan said beat almost sharply on her tortured brain.

The rest of her story was but the realization of a great fear and trouble Penelope had grown to anticipate.

"When I had watched Denis go away I turned and went into my room. I felt I could not bear her. Fortunately we had had luncheon, so I had no absolute necessity for meeting her just for the moment. Shorten came to me by and by, and said Mrs. Latimar's maid wished to know if I was going out driving, as her mistress would like to join me. I sent back word that I should not drive, but that the carriage was at her disposal; then I went to my bedroom to lie down, and so I escaped her. About half an hour before your man arrived with the news of her accident, these two notes come by hand. Denis must have written them from the railway station, for it was one of the porters who brought them. Read for yourself, my dear." Lady Susan gave Penelope an open envelope. "I cannot blame him, poor boy. There is a limit to every one's endurance. I felt when I looked on his face that Denis could endure no more for the moment—and I was right, you see. I cannot blame him—no; and I can only hope it will have a beneficial effect, though I doubt it."

Penelope opened Denis's note. It was written in pencil very hurriedly. She knew its contents before reading. He had gone; he could bear no more. Oh, how she had dreaded this!

"DEAR AUNT SUSAN: This is a line to tell you not to be alarmed or surprised if I do not turn up for dinner to-night. To tell you the honest truth, I shall in all probability stay in London for the next twenty-four hours—perhaps longer. I don't feel in a mood for the ball, and I have already telegraphed an excuse to the committee for my non-appearance. Give a business apology to your guests this evening for my absence from your dinner-table; and try and forgive me for seeming, I fear, both rude and neglectful. Your affectionate boy. D. L."

"N.B.—I have written to my wife."

"And here is the note," Lady Susan said, holding out a second envelope. "I think, Pen, dear, if you don't mind, I shall decide not to see Mrs. Latimar just for the moment. I am not quite equal to it. I feel I should work myself into an agitation beyond words, and I must get back quickly. You know I have a little dinner to-night. I shall be very wicked for once, and give Marcia's accident as the cause for their joint absence. Do you not think that will be best?"

Penelope had one final struggle with herself. She was trembling from head to foot when she spoke.

"Wise and best," she said, in a low, hurried voice. She turned to a bell. "I will have this note sent to Marcia at once," she added, "and—and I quite understand, dear Lady Sue, you would rather not go to her. I don't think it will be necessary to let her know you have come. She is not to know you brought this letter."

Penelope stood for a moment when her face was turned from her friend, and pressed her hand over her eyes and over her lips. At this juncture she felt she would have given all she possessed in the world had Marcia Latimar been anywhere but under her roof. For the first time in her life Penelope allowed anger to dominate her. The thought of Denis was the cause of this, and the memory of his wrongs made Marcia suddenly loathsome in her eyes.

"I do not want to see her. I do not want to have anything to do with her!" she said to herself, passionately, in this instant, and then she shivered as with sudden cold—a strange chill feeling had crept over her heart. Penelope had never known such a feeling before. Was it anger? was it presentiment or fear? She could not have told. She did not understand. She did not even question. She only realized it, and the realization was horrible.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 11.]

* * *

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

It was a noble Roman,
In Rome's imperial day,
Who heard a coward croaker,
Before the battle say:—
"They're safe in such a fortress,
There is no way to shake it—"
On! on!" exclaimed the hero,
"*I'll find a way, or make it!*"

Is *Fame* your aspiration?
Her path is steep and high;
In vain he seeks the temple,
Content to gaze and sigh;
The shining throne is waiting,
But he alone can take it
Who says, with Roman firmness,
I'll find a way, or make it!

Is *Learning* your ambition?
There is no royal road;
Alike the peer and peasant
Must climb to her abode;
Who feels the thirst of knowledge,
In Helicon may slake it,
If he has still the Roman will
To find a way, or make it!

Are *Riches* worth the getting?
They must be bravely sought;
With wishing and with fretting,
The boon cannot be bought;
To all the prize is open,
But only he can take it,
Who says, with Roman courage,
I'll find a way, or make it!

In *Love's* impassioned warfare,
The tale has ever been
That victory crowns the valiant;
The brave are they who win;
Though strong is Beauty's castle,
A lover still may take it,
Who says, with Roman daring,
I'll find a way, or make it!

* * *

A DINNER OF POSIES.

The buds and flowers of a very large number of plants are used as articles of food. Just how many of these are so used we rarely stop to consider, unless our attention is particularly called to the subject. Many persons have eaten salads of nasturtium flowers and leaves; a few have cultivated a taste for a salad of chrysanthemum flowers.

There are all over the world trees, shrubs and plants that furnish nutritious and agreeable food in their blossoms. One of the most important of these grows in India. The tree is the mahwa, and its blossoms are an extremely valuable article of food for the natives. These blossoms are large and abundant, and have a sweet, somewhat sickly odor and taste, and fall during the night. In the morning they are gathered as soon as daylight appears, and may be eaten raw or dried in ths sun. The natives store them as a staple article of food, and so largely do they depend upon these trees that when the outlying tribes become insubordinate there is no punishment or command that will so quickly subdue them as the threat of cutting down these trees.

From the flowers of the mahwa a strong spirit is distilled, and this is used in large quantities by the natives. There are ways of cooking these dried flowers, although they are frequently eaten in the natural state. They are also added to grains and other foods, and dainties and sweetmeats are made of them. Four hundred pounds of flowers are often gathered from one tree, and as they are one of the leading articles of diet, their importance can readily be seen. Another species of the same tree grows malabar. These flowers and buds are eaten raw or may be dried and roasted. Sometimes they are made into jellies or rolled into balls, and in this state form an article of barter, being exchanged for goods and edibles of all sorts.

The flowers of the Judas tree are made into salads and cooked in various ways. The flower buds are sometimes used as pickles. The French Canadians use the flowers of the red bud for salads and pickles. There is a variety of abutilon the flowers of which are used in Brazil as a vegetable. Pepper, cloves and cassia are flower buds, and there are buds and berries of many other trees that enter largely into the preparation of Oriental delicacies. The cauliflower, as we eat it, is nothing more nor less than an undeveloped flower, and there is a plant in China that bears a flower-stalk and bud which is greatly liked, and is said to resemble a very rich, ripe pear. These are but a few of the bountiful provisions of nature, and they are usually to be found in tropical countries and in localities where the natives depend largely on the vegetation for their subsistence.

CLEMATIS KNOWLTON.*

BY J. G. TOWNSEND.

CHAPTER I.

The sun had just sunk behind the distant horizon-line of the prairie. The homely, irregular ranch-house, the long, low sheds, the sheep corral, the sunken straw-stack and the wide-stretching prairie were ingulfed in waves of glorious purple. In the distance was seen the large herd of sheep, followed by the herder and his dogs—slow-moving spots of gorgeous color.

Standing near the ranch-house was a girl, with a face so pretty withal that Titian would have loved to paint it, there was so much warmth and color in it. Clad in a neat-fitting gown of some light color, her full and graceful figure made a brave silhouette against the dark side of the house.

A handsome man stood beside her. He was nearly thirty years of age, dark of face, eyes and hair. He was pleading with the girl to be his wife, with the rude and simple eloquence of sincerity.

"But I have loved you, senorita, ever sence you were so high," measuring the height with a gesture of the hand, "and now you have come so tall and beautiful, I cannot keep my speech."

"But you would not wish me to marry you, unless I loved you, Lon," said the girl, surprised at the persistence of the man.

"Can you not love me a little, senorita?" replied the man, with a passionate hunger in his eyes.

"A sister's affection; yes, Lon, I can give you that."

"I want not a sister's feeling," said the man, with angry but eloquent gesture. "It is not the loaf I ask, only one little crumb," his tender manner returning.

"But suppose, Lon, there was some one else?"

The girl determined to treat him with candor, though her cheeks flushed with the revelation of her secret.

"Ah!" said the man, with deep respiration. "Ees it the Senor Alfred?"

"Yes, it's Alph," said the girl, blushing divinely, her eyes upon the ground.

But when she raised her eyes the girl noticed that his dark face grew ashen in color. There was an expression in his face she had never seen before; and his hand grasped nervously the handle of his revolver at his side.

"You would not shoot a woman! You would not shoot me, Lon?"

She put her hand on his arm and looked him bravely in the eye. Never was she so beautiful as she stood there, her exquisite little head thrown back, her large, dark eyes flashing her courage and her scorn.

"No, senorita, I cannot shoot you. I could die for you."

The man's voice grew low and tender, and the deep yearning came back into his eyes.

"But you'll not shoot Alph, will you, Lon? Promise me you will not."

A great fear possessed her. She was all woman now.

The look of hate gleamed again in his eyes as the man laughed loudly and unnaturally.

"Do not you be frightened; I will not shoot the senor."

"Oh, Lon, I love him so! Do not hurt him for my sake!"

The man's glance softened a little with her pleading.

"Let not fear be in your heart, senorita," said the man again; "but strength seems not mine any more."

The herd having now come up with tumultuous bleating, the man turned and walked slowly away into the illuminated prairie. The girl noticed a look in his face as if he were aging, and his tall form seemed to stoop and totter.

Alonzo Memlico had come to this Kansas ranch several years before the time of this meeting, with a gang of shearers from New Mexico. Of his former history little was known. In point of education he was superior to his fellows. He remained on the ranch a good part of the year, sometimes working with vehemence; at other times he spent weeks in idling or dreaming. It occasioned no surprise when he came or went, for he came and disappeared without warning. He was unusually good-natured, and his anger was slow in coming, but when it did come, his Spanish blood manifested itself in prolonged sullen and revengeful moods. So, while not quarrelsome, it came to be considered prudent not to make an enemy of Lon.

It was observed that Lon was extremely fond of Clematis, the only daughter of Mr. Knowlton, the owner of the sheep ranch; but as she was but a child when he first came to the ranch, and he nearly twice her age, nothing was thought of it by the family. Often Lon used to say to Clem, as they all called her, in his polite Spanish way:

"You shall be my wife some day, senorita."

Clem would reply, laughingly:

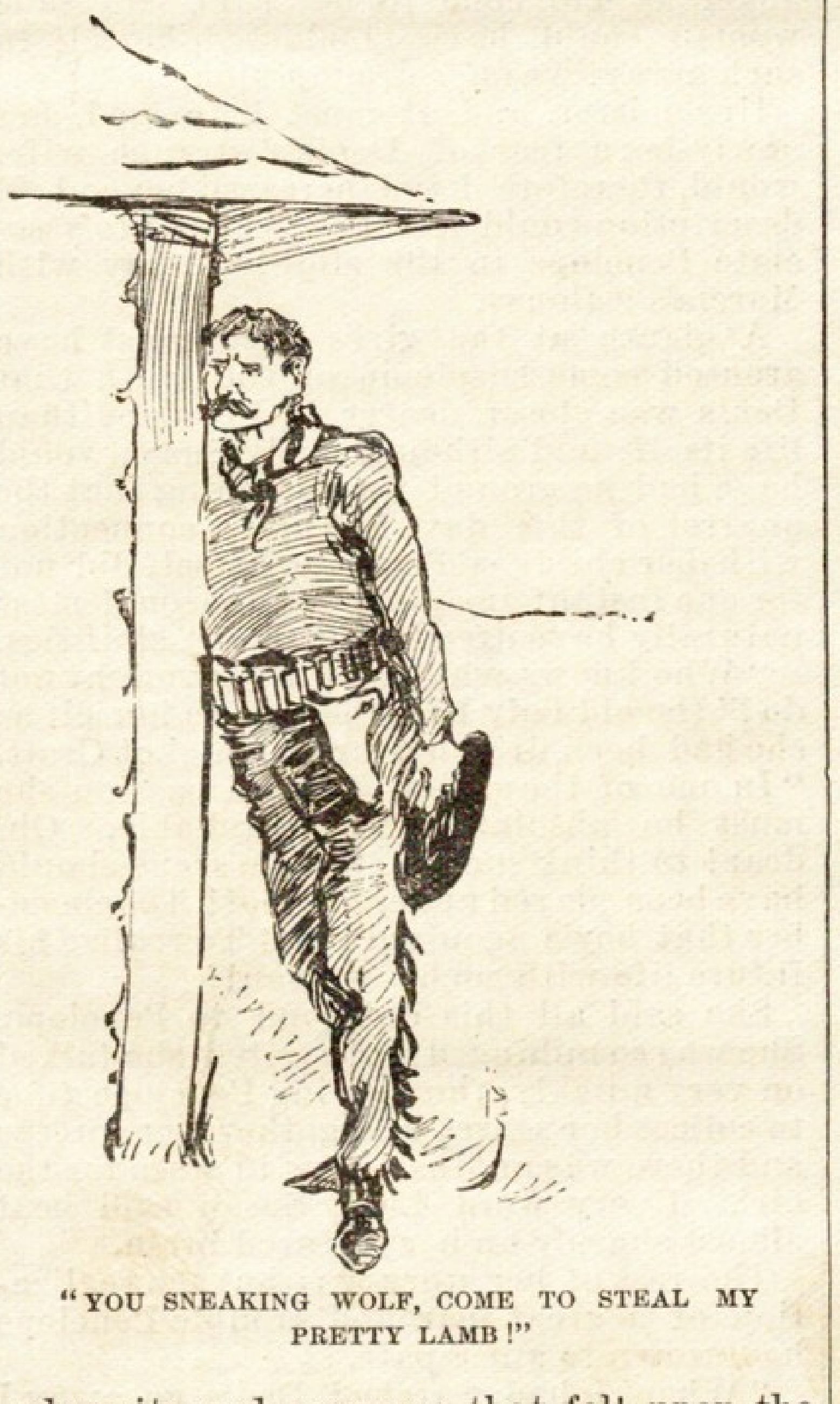
"If my hero does not come along I will, Lon."

But suddenly there had come to Clematis Knowlton that marvelous transformation into the fullness of womanhood; the prairie flower had bloomed into wondrous beauty, and with that transition Clem found that her hero had come, and she gave herself to him, with all the confidence of her young and ardent nature.

The declaration that Alonzo Memlico made came to her with surprise and pain.

She had never thought of him as a lover, and the manifestation of his passion filled the breast of the lovely girl with strange forebodings. She knew something of his sullen and revengeful nature. That laugh of Lon's when he promised not to shoot Alph still rang in her ears with a horrible dissonance.

She determined to walk out on the prairie, for it was not quite dark, to meet her lover, whom she was that evening expecting. The solemnity and grayness that fell upon the wide expanse of prairie corresponded to the vague feeling of trouble that possessed her. She felt that she must at once inform Alph of the danger that threatened him.



"YOU SNEAKING WOLF, COME TO STEAL MY PRETTY LAMB!"

Alfred Long was a young man who had come from Ohio several years before to make his fortune on a Kansas ranch. He had commenced with a little flock of sheep, and by industry and good management his herd had grown until he was one of the largest flock-masters in the country. There was that about Alfred Long that marked him for manliness and honor. He was modest, quiet, brave, and possessed the confidence of his neighbors in an unusual degree. His ranch was near that of Mr. Knowlton, so that he early met Clematis and naturally fell in love with her, and in the last few months they had plighted troth to each other, but their engagement was not known outside of the family of the Knowltons.

Clem saw a black speck moving swiftly along a distant undulation of the prairie. She walked toward it, and soon found it resolve itself into Alph on his pony, who was hastening to keep his tryst. He threw himself from the pony, and the lovers were in each other's arms.

"Why, darling, what makes you tremble so?"

"Oh, Alph! I'm so afraid for you."

She kissed him passionately.

"'Fraid for me? What is it, sweetheart?"

"It's Lon. He told me he loved me, and I can't forget the hate I saw in his eyes when I told him I was going to marry you, Alph," said the girl, sobbing and shivering.

"Now, don't, don't, little one. Lon will get over this," said Alph, kissing her tears away.

"Would you get over it, Alph?" said Clem, archly, smiling through the radiant drops.

"Heavens! Clem, if you put it that way—but I'm not afraid. I'll make it all right with Lon."

They had now reached the ranch, and Alph, throwing the rein of the pony over a post, went with Clem into the house.

But another eye had seen this meeting on the prairie, and Lon shook with rage as he saw the tender embrace.

"Curse ye, curse ye," he hissed, "ye sneaking wolf, come to steal my pretty lamb!"

In the morning Clem found that Lon had gone away without warning, but her father said he would be back for the shearing. The girl was relieved by his absence, but could not entirely quell the haunting dread that oppressed her.

The time soon came for the shearing of the herd, and the gang of shearers was at work. There was heard the "click," "click" of the swift-moving shears, intermingled with the bleating of the lambs separated from their mothers. Lon had come back and was working busily, albeit it was noticed how somber and gloomy he looked.

"Yer'd think Lon'd lost his last friend on 'arth," said one of the shearers.

"Guess his gal's gave him the grand bounce," chuckled another.

To their good-natured sallies Lon made little reply, only clipped on the faster.

Alph was also among the shearers, as he had clipped his own flock early, and there was no faster shearer, no one more popular than the young Ohioan.

During the week of the shearing Clem was accosted by an old man, a herder, who had been for many years on the ranch.

"What is it, Joe?" as she saw he had something to say to her.

"Clem," the old man gave an embarrassed cough, for he had guessed her secret, "I don't want to make you oneasy, but I don't like the look o' Lon's face when his eyes is on Alph. It kinder makes me grow cold!"

"Oh! Joe, you'll watch him. You'll not let him hurt Alph, will you?" said Clem, pleadingly, all her fears returning.

"I'll keep my eyes on him when I's 'round, but the sarpint may bite in the dark."

"Oh! Joe, I've that feeling, too—that Lon may strike Alph in some unguarded hour. Oh! what shall we do?" said Clem, sobbing.

"Don't cry, Clem. Ef old Joe doesn't keep his eye peeled, it's 'cause he's sleepin'."

One night, shortly after this conversation, Clem was sitting at the window in her little room, her heart filled with strange and indefinable forebodings. She had blown out the lamp, and all was silent in the house, when suddenly she heard a footfall on the prairie outside. Her eye, at the same time, caught sight of a figure which instantly disappeared in the shadows. Somehow she felt it was Lon, and that he was going in the direction of Alph's ranch. To put on her hat, place her revolver in the pocket of her dark gown (for Clem was an expert shot) and steal softly out of the house, was quickly done. Her determination was to follow the retreating figure and find his destination. Softly calling her faithful dog Jack, she followed on the trail of the man who had disappeared.

There was no moon, but the stars were unusually brilliant. Far off glowed a great red planet glittering like a jewel on the bosom of the night. The air was sweet with the faint perfume of the spring flowers. The silence was weird and oppressive, save when broken by the cry of the coyote, the bleating of a sheep, or the call of a disturbed bird. But Clem, a child of the prairie, was not afraid for herself, but felt sick at heart as she thought of the danger that threatened her beloved. Walking rapidly but noiselessly, with a whisper of quiet to Jack, she had not gone more than half a mile when she came in sight of the figure moving before her.

CHAPTER II.

Would he go down the "draw?" she thought, for that led directly to Alph's cabin. The man, without stopping, commenced to follow the windings of the "draw" which cut into the prairie a deep, irregular gash. Clem's heart was beating fast now, but she kept the man in sight, keeping Jack by her side. The dog was quiet, save at intervals giving out a low whine. Evidently he knew the man whom they were following. They were now near the ranch cabin, for Clem could hear the gurgling of the springs that gushed out of the sides of the "draw." When the man came as far as the spring he stood perfectly motionless a long time. It seemed an age to Clem. She could not, from where she was crouching in one of the niches of the sheep-shed, distinguish his features. Suddenly the man lifted his arm and shook his fist in the direction of the cabin, then turned and came so near Clem she thought he could hear the beating of her heart. She pressed her hand over the dog's mouth, and the intelligent animal divined he was to be silent.

As the man passed, Clem got a fair look at him, and, dim as the star-shine was, she saw it was Lon. He never looked around, however, but hesitated a few moments, and then slowly and softly approached the cabin, where Alph and his herders were, as as she supposed, sleeping. Lon, having reached the cabin, crouched in a corner where the darkness was clinging in deep shadows. What his object was Clem could not determine, as from her place of concealment she watched him anxiously. Suddenly in the distance she heard the sound of wheels. What could it mean? Then she remembered that Alph had talked of going to town for some supplies. He often drove in after the day's work was through. Her heart was beating violently. What should she do? She must warn Alph in some way of his danger. Some three hundred yards down the draw narrowed to a few feet. If only she could reach it unobserved, she could stop Alph and warn him. Calling Jack with a mute sign, she passed rapidly round the corral, and entered the bed of the little stream that ran down the draw. There was not much water in it at this time of the year, and, as the channel was deep, Clem kept herself concealed below the banks until she was a hundred yards beyond the cabin. Then she ascended to the level and ran swiftly toward the coming wagon—she reached the narrow part of the draw just as Alph came up with the ponies. They shied affrighted at the apparition.

"Alph, Alph, stop!" she cried.

Alph knew her voice, and in an instant sprang from the wagon and was at her side.

"Why, Clem! What is the matter?"

"Oh, Alph!" cried Clem, shivering and sobbing. "It's Lon."

"Lon!"

"Yes, yes, at the cabin waiting for you."

"At the cabin!"

"Yes, I was sitting by the window—I could not sleep, I was so troubled—I saw him stealing over the prairie, and I followed him—Jack and I, and he went down the draw and hid himself in a niche in the cabin, and is waiting for you. Oh, Alph, I'm so afraid! He wants to kill you, I'm sure."

"Well!" said Alph, "it does look as though he meant mischief, but," kissing her tenderly, "you stay with the ponies, and I'll go down to the ranch and interview the fellow."

"No, no, Alph; not for the world would I let you go alone."

"Well, what then?"

"Let me go with you—oh, do, Alph."

"Well, sweetheart, if you must."

Alph fastened the ponies, and they went hand in hand for the ranch, followed by Jack. They kept in the shadow of the bushes that fringed the banks of the little stream for some distance, and then descended into it, stooping so as to conceal themselves as they silently threaded the tortuous tunnel. When they came opposite to the cabin Alph took a look through a rent in the bushes, but in the dim star-shine he could not discern Lon's hiding-place. All was quiet, save the musical tinkles of the tiny stream, and above their heads was the peaceful sky, glowing with the brilliancy of innumerable stars.

After waiting a few minutes Clem finally consented to let Alph work his way round the corral. This he did, and came back to Clem down the bed of the stream and reported that Lon was nowhere to be seen.

"Suppose I send Jack out," whispered Clem.

"Very well," assented Alph.

"Go find Lon, Jack," said Clem in a low tone.

The intelligent dog started and followed Lon's track to the cabin, and then ran down the draw and disappeared. Clem pressed Alph's hand, for Lon must have gone towards the wagon. But presently Jack returned and ascended the draw, showing that the trail went in that direction. In the course of a few minutes the dog came back and crouched at Clem's feet with a low whine.

"Lon has gone home," cried Clem.

"Yes," assented Alph, "and now I must see you there."

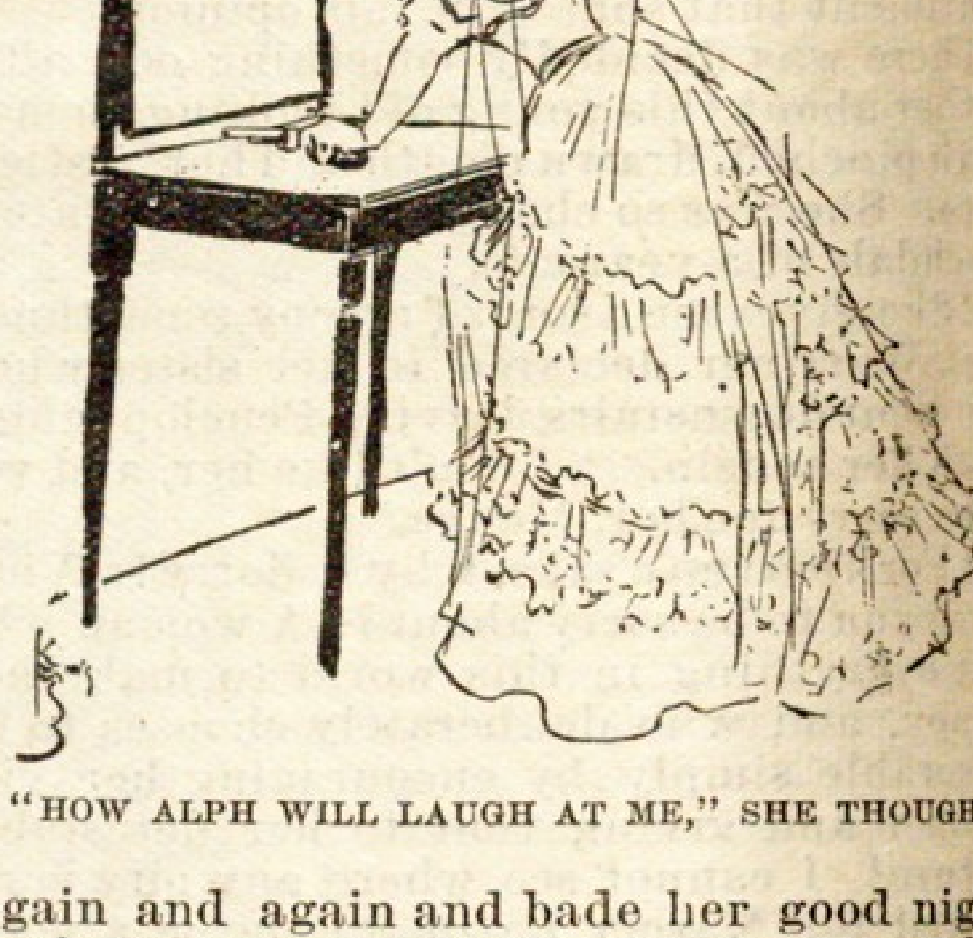
"No, I can go alone. I'm not a bit afraid for myself, but, oh, Alph, my heart is so heavy with fear for you."

"You must not worry so, sweetheart," said Alph, kissing her tenderly. "I shall be on guard now. But let me saddle a pony for you now and take you home."

"No, Alph," said Clem; "Lon may be concealed somewhere waiting for us and he would hear the pony. We must walk."

"Well, I shall let you have your way this time," replied the lover.

Arm in arm they ascended the draw to the open prairie, Alph scrutinizing every place where a man might conceal himself, but he saw nothing of Lon. When they came to the house, Clem clung to Alph as though she could not let him go. Alph kissed her again and again and bade her good night, saying that Lon and he must have an understanding in the morning.



"HOW ALPH WILL LAUGH AT ME," SHE THOUGHT.

"Oh, Alph, if you only could go away for awhile."

"No," said Alph, firmly, "I could not do that."

Clem watched her lover until his form disappeared in the darkness, and then went upstairs to her room without being observed, but she sat long at her window, and the dawn began to stain the east before her eyes were closed in slumber. When, some time in the forenoon, Alph came to the ranch, he was met by Clem, who told him that Lon had disappeared and left no word.

Alph was naturally courageous and unsuspicious, and he made light of Lon's nocturnal journey.

"Now, sweetheart, you must promise me not to make any more tramps at night. Lon could not sleep, and he walked to make himself drowsy. If he intended to injure me he would have done it ere this. These jealous passions wear themselves out. Now you

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must not worry any more, darling," said Alph hopefully.

"Oh, Alph," and he felt her tremble in his arms, "I have such forebodings. If I only could plead with Lon, but he gives me no opportunity to speak to him, and, oh, the look I saw in his face when I told him I was going to marry you, and his conduct last night—oh, it makes me so fearful."

"Nonsense, Clem. You know I shall soon take you away, and then Lon will look out for some one else."

Clem's face was suffused for the moment with a happy blush, but the old fear soon returned to her. If it were only some tangible trouble she would find some means to fight it, but how could she forefend against a suspicion, a shadow? Yet Lon surely meant mischief when he went in the middle of the night to Alph's cabin in that stealthy way.

It had been agreed between Clem and Alph that they should be married immediately after the shearing. And preparations were now making for the simple wedding in the ranch house. The plain wedding gown was made, and in the preparation for the wedding feast Clem's time was taken up, so she had no time for brooding. Lon had not returned, and her fears, while not dispelled, were not so active.

The wedding night came, guests and minister arrived, and all was bustle and joyous confusion. Clem was clad in her soft, snow-white gown, and all said she was the prettiest bride they ever saw. Indeed, Clem was a fairy, who made every spot enchanted ground. Several times Clem's eyes caught sight of her revolver lying in its accustomed place, but she thought it would be foolish to carry it when she was going to be married; but finally, she could not explain why, she picked it up and placed it in the pocket of her dress. "How Alph will laugh at me," she thought.

Shortly after this the simple marriage service was proceeding in the little room, Alph and Clem standing in front of the guests, facing the minister.

"Alfred, wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?"

"I will," said Alph, in a firm, clear voice.

"Clematis, wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?"

"I will," said Clem in a low but audible tone.

"Then I pronounce you husband and wife."

"Let us pr—" The minister did not finish the sentence, for the startled guests and friends saw Clem turn with a revolver in her hand, and then heard two almost simultaneous pistol shots.

There were screaming, shouting and wildest confusion and terror in the bridal-room. It was noticed that Clem clutched Alph convulsively, and then fainted.

The forebodings that had filled the heart of Clem had been verified in a strange and awful manner. As the marriage service was proceeding Clem's eyes were drawn, by a strange attraction, to the old mirror which hung a little to the right. It was quite large and valued as an heirloom, having been a present from her maternal grandmother. She observed that she could see in it the reflection of the open window on the opposite side of the room, for all the windows were raised, the evening being very warm. The guests could not see the mirror, as it was behind them.

When the minister began to say: "Let us pray," Clem's eyes were fascinated, her heart ceased to beat, the blood forsook her face, for there in the glass she saw Lon's face and extended hand, and in that hand a revolver pointed at Alph.

If the pistol had been pointed at herself, Clem would have been helpless, but when she saw it directed at her lover all the latent tiger-mother feeling was aroused in her.

Not longer did it take the pendulum in the old clock to make its lazy swing, than was Clem in seizing her revolver, turning and firing.

Then she clutched Alph and fainted. Alph caught her as she was falling, and carried her and laid her on the lounge.

When, after a long time she came to consciousness, Alph was holding her hands and bending over her, the big tears running down his face.

"Oh, Alph, are you hurt?"

"Not a scratch, dearest. Be quiet now, for a little while."

"Thank God," and there was a long sigh.

"And Lon?" she said, after a time.

"He will never trouble you again," said Alph.

Indeed Clem had shot the would-be assassin through the heart, and he died before Clem came to consciousness, with a "curse him" on his lips.

The ball shot from Lon's revolver, diverted by Clem's shot, struck the old mirror, and bored through it a tiny hole, from which radiated long lines of cleavage. It was the unanimous verdict at the inquest that Clem had saved her lover's life.

It was months before Clem regained her cheerfulness, but time and love triumph over all things, and serenity and peace came back again to Clem's heart. Now there is no one more happy, and certainly no one more beautiful, than the mistress of the Long Ranch in far western Kansas.

THE END.

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–The roar of the lion can be heard farther than the sound of any living creature.

A Valuable Claim.

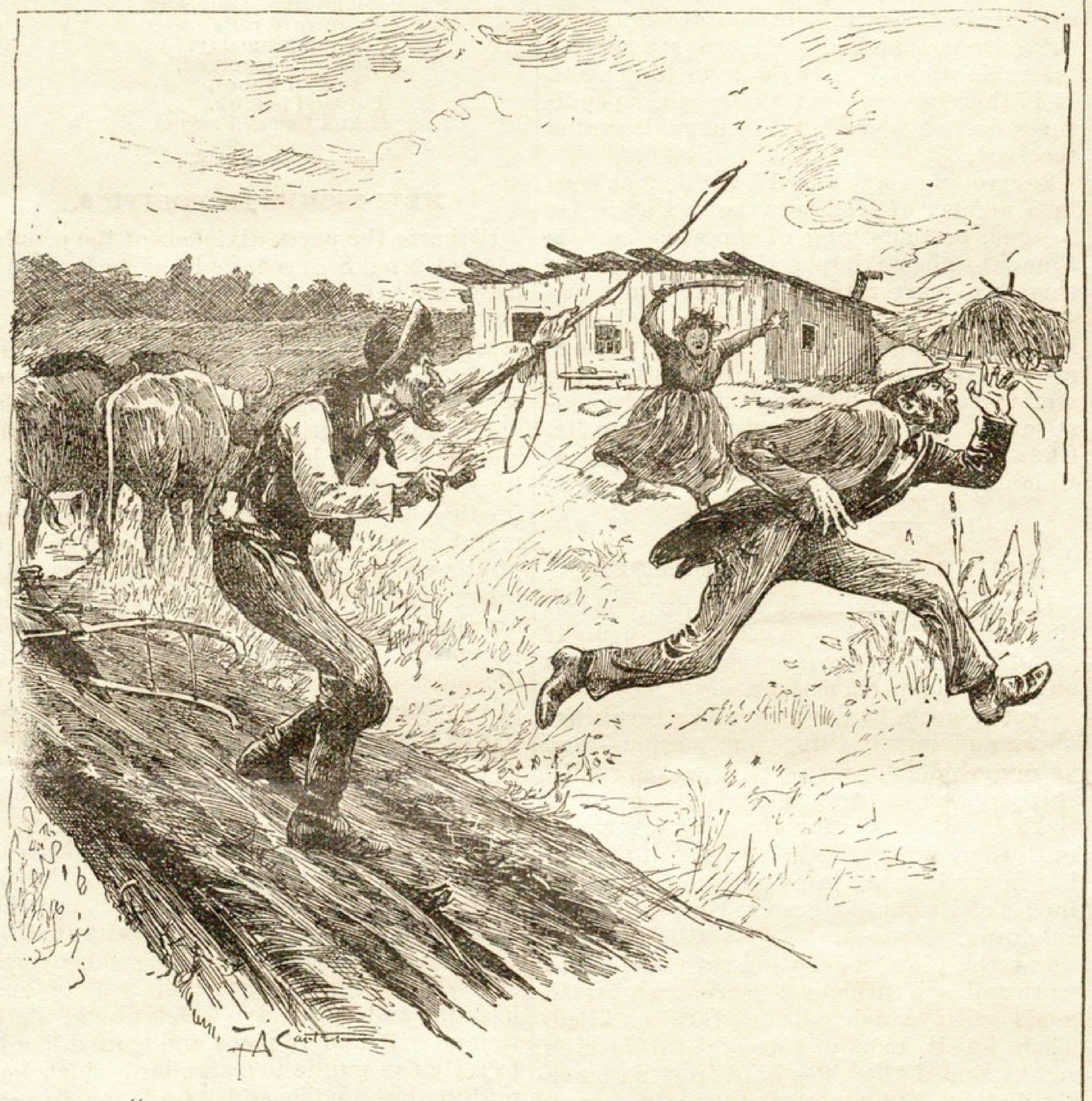
BY WILL LISENBEE.

Buck Simmons walked behind the huge prairie-breaking plow, watching, with evident satisfaction, the chocolate-colored ribbons of earth which the plow was turning over. The two yokes of oxen that drew the plow were showing no inclination to hurry through life, which disposition was in perfect harmony with Buck's own feelings on the subject. He did not believe in physical precipitation in connection with common labor. To be in a hurry seemed to him to be a species of folly that was totally inexcusable.

On reaching the end nearest the cabin he brought the team to a halt, and, allowing the cattle to graze on the luxuriant grass, seated himself on the beam of his plow and lighted his pipe.

"Thar ain't much better land than this in these parts," he mused, "an' as fer watermelons, it can't be beat this side uv the Rockies."

A covered wagon, drawn by a pair of shabby sorrel mules, came to a halt in the road close by, and a bushy-bearded man got out.



"BLAME MY CATS, THAT'S MANDY HAVIN' ONE UV THEM FITS!"

"My name's Billings—Zeke Billings," he said, as he came up to the spot where Buck was seated. "I'm looking for a claim to buy. Can you direct me to where I can find a good one which I could purchase at a reasonable figure?"

"Ye couldn't 'a' struck it better if ye'd 'a' searched fer a week," replied Buck, removing his pipe from his mouth and blowing a cloud of smoke from his bearded lips.

"That's fortunate," responded the stranger. "Then I may infer that you can give me the desired information?"

"Ye've sed it."

"Thank you. Is the land in question near here?"

"'Bout six inches from whar ye're standing."

"Ah, I see. Your own claim is for sale?"

"It can be bought."

"How much land is in your claim? A full quarter section?"

"Ye've sed it."

"Is the land good?"

"Think I'd be a-plowin' pore land? What do ye take me fer? Must think I'm powerful fond uv work!"

"No offense, I assure you," replied Billings. "What advantages does your claim possess besides that mentioned?"

"'Tain't more 'an four miles ter water."

"Why, do you call four miles from water close?"

"Ye would if ye'd hauled it twenty-six miles fer one season."

"But I wouldn't live in such a country as that. A man wouldn't get anything but water-hauling done."

"Thar warn't anything else ter do thar."

"Didn't you raise any crops?"

"Nary crop."

"Why, wouldn't anything grow there?"

"Lots uv 'em."

"What was it?"

"Lizards."

"You must have been in a desert."

"You've sed it."

"What made you stay in such a country?"

"Couldn't git away."

"What made you go there?"

"Ter git a claim."

"Why, what on earth could you want with a claim in a place like that?"

"A man's got ter meck a livin'."

"Make a living? How did you expect to make a living in a desert where nothing would grow?"

"Sell my claim."

"The man who bought it must have been a fool."

"You've sed it."

"How did you happen to find a buyer?"

"It allus rained oncet a year; then we hus'led ter sell out 'fore the ground dried. That was our bizy time."

"What do you suppose a man would think of you for selling him such a claim?"

"I never stayed ter see."

"I suppose not. What did the man that bought your claim do when he found out what kind of a place he had got into?"

"Lived thar till the next rain."

"What then?"

"He sold out ter another feller. The West is a great edicator. A feller can't stay hyar long an' be a tenderfoot. Ye'll say so 'fore ye're hyar a year. Now, this yere claim uv mine—"

"To be sure—we were talking about your claim. I can see that the land is very good, and I suppose water could be got by sinking a well. I like the lay of this piece of land, and if your price is reasonable, I might strike a bargain with you."

"Ye've sed it."

"What would you call a fair price for your claim?"

"'Bout er thousan' dollars."

"A thousand dollars! Why, man, I can get as good a claim as can be found in the county for two hundred dollars. Remember you can give no deed, but only quit your claim."

"I likewise knows all that; but this yere ain't no common claim. Say five hundred?"

"No. Two fifty is the most I can give."

"Then the claim's yourn."

"You mean that you will take two hundred and fifty dollars for your claim?"

"Ye've sed it."

"Very well. I will come back in a few days and have the papers fixed up."

"That seems fair-like; but I puts it like this: Ye're a stranger ter me, an' mebby ye comes back, an' mebby ye don't. If I holds this yere claim fer ye, ye pays me now twenty-five dollars in hand, the rest ter be paid in three days, when ye gits the claim."

"That is fair enough. I will make out a receipt for the money and a contract for you to sign, so the matter will be all straight."

The stranger took out a book, and writing the desired documents, gave them to Buck to sign, while he counted out the required sum of money. When the amount had been paid and the papers signed, Billings said:

"That fixes the matter all right. I will come back in three days and pay the rest of the money and take possession of the claim."

He was about to retrace his steps to his wagon when Buck stopped him with a wave of his hand.

"As I war jist sayin'," he said, this yere is no common claim; but thar aire fellers that would try ter meck out like this: they wouldn't have the claim as a gift."

"Why, what do they say is the matter with it?" asked Billings, growing interested.

"'Tain't hardly worth repeatin'," went on Buck in a careless tone. "I puts it that it is jealousy uv them, seein' I've got the best claim in the settlement. If ye seed one uv them fellers it's likely he'd say that thar can't be no water got on this yere claim. He'd say that the well-borer war hyar an' bored about six hundred feet an' got no water. That would be a lie, 'cause he only bored four hundred feet, but I'll allus believe he'd 'a' got water if he'd 'a' bored deep enough. Then some object ter the claim 'cause they sez I've settled on a school section, which ain't open for settlement, an' that I'll haf ter git off soon as a school board is organized. But how the Sam Hill do they know who the school board's goin' ter be, an' how can they tell what they're goin' ter do 'fore they're elected? Some people does meck me have that tired feelin'!"

"Why, if that is the case," broke in Billings, "I don't know as—"

"I ain't through yit," put in Buck. "Let me tell ye all the onery skunks aire doin' ter ruin the repertashun uv this yere claim Some puts it that it is too close ter the line uv the Injun Territory, an' that the road agents an' robbers would kill a feller off as fast as he could come hyar, an' that sich vishus invirunments would be the sp'ilin' uv the society uv the neighborhood; but thar hain't been but two men killed on this yere claim since I come here, which is full six months ago, an' them war both strangers who war campin' in the road hyar, an' never a-standin' g'ard none. Whatever else could sich chumps expect?"

"That is horrible!" said Billings, with a shiver. "As I were going to say, in that case—"

"I ain't through yit," continued Buck. "I's an honest man, an' b'lieves in tellin' the whole story which them slanderers aire so fond uv exaggeratin'. Some puts it that the snaiks on this yere claim is its greatest drawback, an' ter hear 'em talk ye'd think that a feller couldn't stay hyar fifteen minnets without bein' swallered by them; but wait till I tells ye the true facts. Now, these yere snaiks aire perty bad, 'less ye know how ter take 'em. A feller must wear high boots an' keep his eyes peeled. Then I wears er buckskin suit under my other clothes, which has saved my life more 'an once. Now thar was Ruggy Jones, who lived over thar on the next claim. He comes over ter see me one day, 'lowin' he ain't afeared of no snaik livin'. He warn't the man ter listen ter no reason; he comes a-wearin' uv them low dude gaiters, an' the first thing he knows he's bit with one uv them'snaiks. Well, he slobbers 'round a little, takes a fit, tryin' ter kill everybody, then curls up an' dies deader 'an Moses. 'Twarn't my fault, seein' as how he had been warned; but some folks will be fools. Uv course, accidents will sometimes happen, even with the most keerful. Thar's my wife Mandy, now. Ye couldn't find a keerfuler woman 'an her, but it all happened like this: One night one uv them dad blamed snaiks gits an' hides itself in the bed, an' the first thing we knows Mandy is bit. It warn't her fault, fer who'd think uv wearin' snaik pertecters in the bed? Well, she pumps a gallun uv my best whisky down her throat, an' it kinder newteralizes that yere pizen, so instead uv dyin' she only has some fits. Mandy ain't no slouch in a skirmosh, an' when them fits comes on ye'd be safe in 'lowin' that I had my hands full. She gits the corn-knife, 'lowin' that everybody is after her, an' out she goes, slashin' at everything, dangerus like. It's about daylight by this time, an' she meets Sol Miller, who is out early lookin' fer his mules. She mecks for him, an' 'fore he gits on ter what she's drivin' at, she has sliced off one ov his years, an' he only 'scapes by bein' one uv the best runners in the settlement. She next slashes the head uv my best dog off, an' after she had sliced the tail off one uv my hosses, I finally ropes her. She gets quiet like after awhile, but them fits will come back on her—"

"That is enough," interrupted the stranger. "I wouldn't live on this claim for all the land in the county. Give me back my money, and we will call the trade off."

"No, we don't," replied Buck. "I reckon the contract don't say nothin' about givin' the money back. If ye want the claim, pay the rest an' it's yourn; but if not, the twenty-five is mine. That's the contract."

"All right," replied the stranger. "I guess you are right, if you insist on the full letter of the contract. Blame such a country! I am going to get out of it as soon as I can—"

He was interrupted by a shriek which issued from the cabin, and the next moment the figure of a woman emerged from the door and came running wildly across the prairie, flourishing a corn knife about her head.

"Blame my cats, that's Mandy havin' one uv them fits!" cried Buck. "Look out fer yerself an' team, stranger, while I runs fer a rope!"

But Billings did not wait to listen. With one bound he was in his wagon, and a moment later had lashed the mules into a gallop and was disappearing down the trail in a cloud of dust.

Buck darted around the cabin, the woman in hot pursuit, and this was kept up till the stranger was well out of sight. Then the two went into the house.

"I reckon he's gone for good," said Mandy, laying the corn-knife on the table.

"Ye've sed it. That snaik story fixed him. It allus does."

"How much did you get out of this bargain?" asked the wife.

"Twenty-five. That's the fourth this week. A hundred a week ain't so bad. I reckon I'll knock off work fer the day."

And he sat down and began to examine the money he had received, assuring himself that it was genuine.

"I'll tell ye, Mandy," he said, "a feller can't be too keerful in dealin' with them Eastern sharpers. They are allus up ter some swin'lin' tricks ter beat honest people."

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THE NEW X RAYS.

Interest in the X rays photography increases day by day, and all intelligent persons are eagerly scanning the public prints for the latest manifestations in this most astonishing discovery. The year 1896 is to be distinguished as X-ray photography year.

A good deal has been said about this discovery being accidental. The following account is given of the way in which the first photograph was made: A Crookes tube, covered with a black envelope, was placed near a screen with a surface covered with a fluorescent substance. On exciting the tube a luminous glow appeared on the surface of the screen. Some object was passed before the screen, but did not shut off the rays; then a thick book was interposed between the screen and the tube, but the luminosity continued even through the thousand pages of paper. Metal and wood were interposed in the same way, and with the same results. At last some one suggested putting the hand before the screen. This was done, with the result that the flesh appeared to dissolve, leaving only a shadow of the bony structure on the fluorescent surface. The application of this singular phenomenon to photography was at once discussed and tried, with remarkable success. The first photograph was taken through a body ordinarily considered positively opaque.

The possibilities of this new power disposes of a great many long-established theories. Opaque bodies are opaque only because the proper kind of rays have not been used to penetrate them. This is on the same principle that air and space are empty because we cannot see what they contain. The one conclusion is quite as correct as the other.

Following upon the heels of this amazing array of facts, comes the statement that gravitation is a fixed law only because we have never found the means to neutralize it, and the declaration is made that in the near future we will be able to counteract its attractions so that we may float about and be absolutely independent of the handicap of weight.

When one of our most noted authors wrote his exceedingly bright story called, "Negative Gravity," he little dreamed that during his own lifetime scientists would declare that it might yet be possible to flit around in space by means of discoveries that could be used to counteract the effect of natural gravitation.

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A PUBLIC ART LEAGUE.

It is said that a bill is to be presented to Congress, "requiring that before the purchase or adoption by the Government of any work of art (sculpture, painting, architecture, landscape, design, coin, seal, medal, note, stamp or bond), the design or model for the same shall be submitted to a commission of experts for an expression of opinion as to its artistic merit, and that the approval of such committee shall be a prerequisite to its adoption."

This movement is the outgrowth of a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction with public buildings and the works of art purchased with public money.

It is argued that when buildings are erected by state or national expenditure they are supposed to represent the best forms of art available for such purposes. That they do not do this is painfully evident to those who have taken the trouble to examine these edifices and their contents. Some of the so-called art works outcaricature caricature, others are faulty in the extreme, and many more are merely tolerable when they ought to be high class. It is therefore evident that such expenditures do not represent to the public value received.

So strongly emphasized has this fact been in a number of instances that a Public Art League, or something of the same sort, is thought to be an imperative necessity. As this is a matter that interests every one who pays taxes, it has been decided that, in case the league is established, all persons may become members by requesting the secretary to attach their names to the constitution. All names should be sent to Mr. Glenn Brown, Acting Secretary, National Union Building, Washington, D. C.

◆

SPRING WORK IN THE GARDEN.

It is not a bit too early to begin preparations for the fruit and vegetable garden. If you happen to live where the ground thaws out early in March, make a desperate effort to get a good, heavy team and a breaking-plow, and put it into your garden—that garden that has been skimmed over with cultivators and scraped over with hoes and tickled with rakes for the past few years until there is very little doubt that the soil has never been agitated for more than six inches of its depth since the time of its first subduing.

Put the plow in deep and turn up the unworn soil, and turn down the roots and weed seeds with which the surface is filled. Then let it remain through the coming weeks, and if there is a hard frost, so much the better. Let the spring rains patter on it, and let the March winds blow over it; then, when it is needed, put in a good-sized cultivator and strong horse, and pulverize the clods that have been frozen and thawed and wet and dried until they are, or ought to be, thoroughly disintegrated. Then harrow it well; harrowing is good for gardens. The more of it the better.

One of the best and most productive garden patches in this blessed country of ours was plowed in the fall. The furrows were turned up edgewise, so that the insects and roots of the weeds, and all noxious things therein, could freeze to death if they had half a chance, and they have had it with a vengeance this past winter.

Now, this ground has been gone over half a dozen times with a cultivator, and yet is not done with. The weeds are sprouting in the warm corners, and when they get well under way there will be more cultivator work, and this is going to be done at high noon, when the sun shines; then the mischievous little weeds that become so troublesome later in the season will be dried up and perish, and cause no more annoyance, no more weary backs and aching fingers.

Don't wait until the last minute to get garden seeds and roots and fertilizer. There is always a rush, always a chance for delay, and when everything is ready, and the spirit moves, as it were, the cry goes up: "The seeds have not come, and here we are, waiting for them."

If you are a good and provident gardener, your hot-bed was made long ago, and your plants are coming on apace. Give them plenty of water, and all the sun that bountiful and accommodating Mother Nature furnishes. Keep them covered at night, so that they cannot chill. One blast of cold air will put them back more than a week's good care can set them forward. Be very judicious in the use of fertilizers. Make rather deep trenches where the seeds are to be planted, throw in a little fertilizer—prepared bone dust is the most convenient—and then sprinkle over an inch or so of earth. On this place the seeds and tuck them snugly in their spring beds.

GOD STILL REIGNS!

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

Why talk or preach
  Of fearful times,
In mournful speech
  And lurid rhymes?
Why shade the light,
  Till naught remains
But clouds and night,
  When God still reigns?

Why be the first
  With anxious zest,
To tell the worst
  And miss the best?
To spread ill news
  Why take such pains,
With words profuse,
  When God still reigns?

Better to start
  With purpose strong,
And do *your* part
  To right the wrong—
Life is mads up
  Of smallest grains;
Hold high your cup,
  For God still reigns.

In days of yore
  Hard luck, you'll find,
Our fathers bore,
  And scarce repined.
Though sad their lot
  And small their gains,
They ne'er forgot
  "Our God still reigns."

Cheer up the souls
  Who come your way,
As onward rolls
  Millennium day.
Good shall succeed,
  As evil wanes,
For God is king,
  And *God still reigns.*

◆

NEW ISSUES IN POLITICS.

Hitherto the party divisions of the people of the United States have been built to too great an extent upon issues formulated by politicians, dealing largely in traditional sentiment and party loyalty. Old "dead and gone" political party war-cries have served the purpose of dividing the people and creating partisanship and political animosities, which have no bearing upon the live issues of the day, and which are created for the purpose of blinding the people to the moral cowardice and indifference to the public welfare of the political leaders. As a consequence, the interests of the people are slighted; the issues which ought to be presented are ignored. In an effort to straddle and gain political advantage at the polls, the speeches of the party leaders are filled with vague commonplaces and sham sentiments of patriotism, which are a mockery to the sincere and earnest patriot and public-spirited voter.

It is becoming evident that this state of things cannot continue much longer. People everywhere are inquiring, "What are the uses of parties and party loyalty unless these are instruments to secure good government and to protect the citizen against harmful and oppressive legislation?" Politicians will find it more and more difficult to rally the public to a standard which has nothing but a name and a tradition to recommend it. The party must stand for more than a sentimental shibboleth. The interests of the people of this country are wide and diversified, and involve the bread and butter, the clothing and lodging, the present and prospective welfare of millions of families; the mothers, wives, daughters and infants of the laboring masses of our countrymen.

The welfare of the people is inseparable from their business interests, the work by which they get their daily bread, and the operations of commerce, by which the prosperity of the country is determined and carried forward. There is a growth of public sentiment in the direction of making politics more practical, of exacting more knowledge and judgment in dealing with the business interests of the country from our representatives in the legislative chambers of the States and nation.

In this number of the *Ledger* we publish a protest against a Bill which has been introduced in Congress affecting postage on second-class mail matter, which, if enacted, will work great hardship to large commercial interests, and deprive tens of thousands of their present means of support; which will materially lessen the commerce and intercommunication of the country, and deprive people of remote districts and small towns of hundreds of conveniences which they have hitherto enjoyed, and which, therefore, calls for unanimous and general condemnation. It is such legislation as is proposed, affecting our postal arrangements, which brings reproach to representative institutions, and which calls loudly for more general knowledge of the interests and wants of the mercantile community on the part of our parties and legislators.

◆

THE NEW YORK LEDGER FREE.

We want a bright boy or girl to act as our agent in every city or town in the country. If there is no agent in your town, read our offer on page 19, and get the *New York Ledger* free. See also how your young friend can get a watch free.

A DANGEROUS POSTAL BILL.

A PROTEST BY PUBLISHERS.

That the United States mails were created by the people, for the people, we hold to be a truism; they are the one supreme essential of our civilization, the one greatest conservator of our intelligence, the most distinguished factor in our prosperity. Anything that strikes at their efficiency is detrimental to the common good; any restrictions imposed on their expansion is equally a crime and a mistake in the sense of injury done to the body politic and to the individual.

Yet here we have, in the measure now known as Bill 4566, reported from the House Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, a serious proposal to do this very injury—to inhibit the mails from their hitherto good work in spreading abroad the cheap library literature which has now become, in truth, the literature of the people—to lock the mail-bags against the sample copy of papers and magazines—to exclude supplements and their multifarious free gifts of pictures, designs, artistic suggestions and home utilities—to prohibit special numbers—to cast aside trade and advertising journals—to deny magazine or paper the right to remit current issues to a special list—to prevent the return of unsold numbers of periodicals!

Never before in the history of our legislation has such an attempt been made to repress the spread of reading matter by making it dearer, or to circumscribe the circulation of papers and periodicals by imposing on their necessary methods of business such onerous burdens of higher postage as strikes at their prosperity and restrains their generous efforts towards greater literary excellence and greater quantity of matter.

All this may seem startling, or a possible misconstruction of the purpose and terms of this drastic reconstruction of the Postal Laws relating to papers, magazines and serial publications; but a careful examination of the bill, and a clear apprehension of its provisions, must sustain our assumption both as to the direct and to the incidental effect of this new departure in postal rates, postal regulations, and post-official authority.

AN UNWARRANTABLE GRANT OF POWER.

To this authority we especially direct attention, for it is an alarming feature of this bill. It confers upon post-office officials a power surpassing any act in the history of unlicensed printing from John Milton's time to the present day. It gives to these officials the absolute right to determine what newspapers and periodicals shall have the advantage of the rates of second-class mail matter! It confers on the Post Office the power to determine what is, and what is not, a periodical; and since there is not a single newspaper or magazine published in the United States which, in some issue, is not amenable to this authoritative discrimination against supplements, premiums and extra free matter, and which, therefore, may be relegated to mail matter of the third class, it literally places them at the mercy of any postmaster's mandate.

In the case of an important periodical, such mandate might mean a loss of thousands of dollars, and entail a permanent detriment to it. Such an exercise of the power of selection or election is a direct inhibition of the liberty of the press, a virtual censorship which should be resisted with all their power by those who value the bulwark of our liberty, a free and untrammeled press.

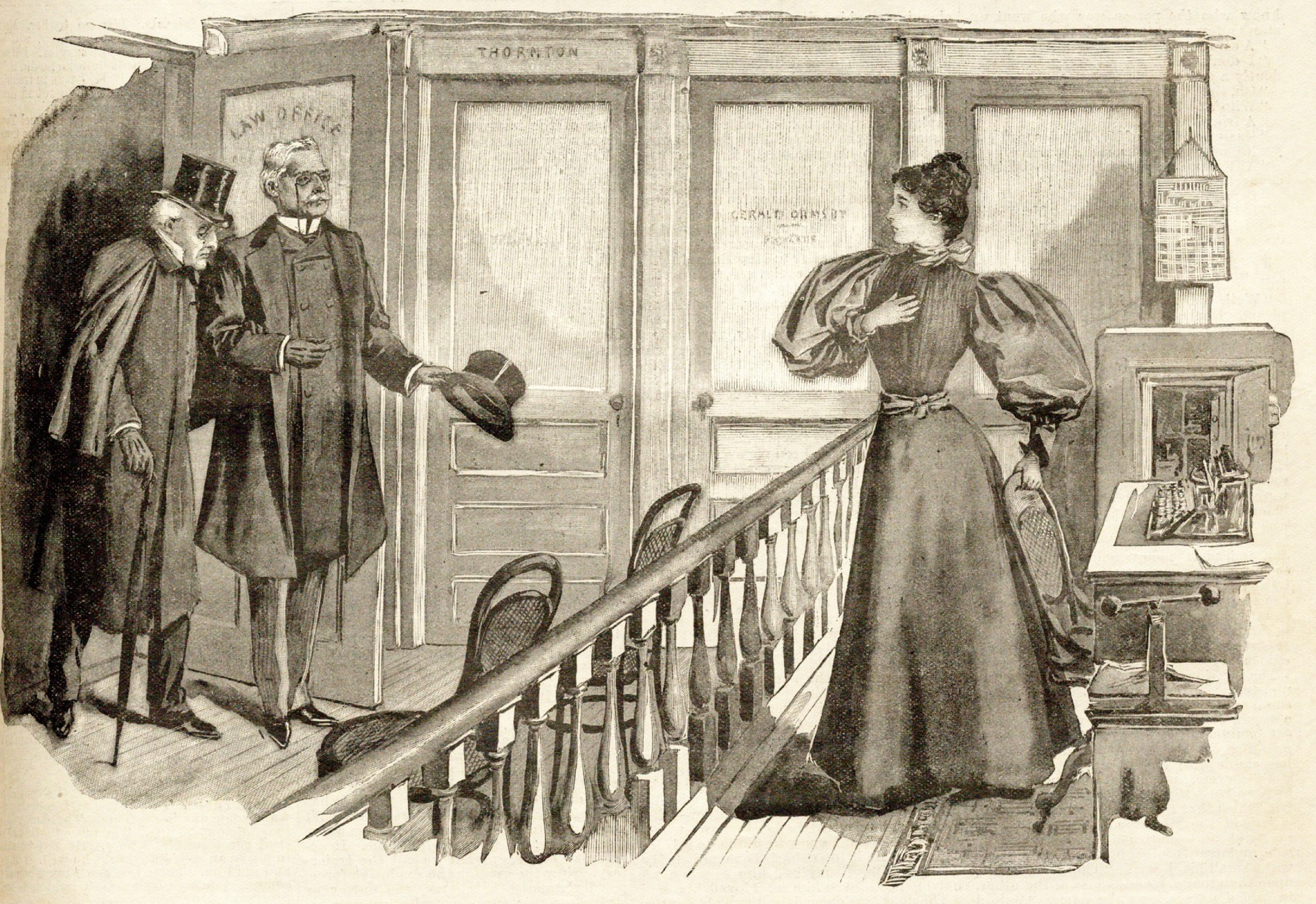
Representatives of the people have always exercised a wise and zealous discretion in grants of power to the Executive arms of the Government. Can they be tolerant now of this undisguised assumption of arbitrary authority? It is not that we question the enlightened judgment of the present Postmaster-General, or the intelligence and patriotism of those who are to follow him in this high office, but we claim that no individual, official or otherwise, should have the power of deciding upon matters which can and should be defined and irrevocably fixed by Statute.

LACK OF SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ABUSE OF POWER.

Nor is it established by this bill that the matter shall be first passed upon, before action is taken, by the Postmaster-General. The postmaster of any city or town is authorized to throw out a periodical as mailable matter of the second class, and then compel the publisher to bring his case before the Postmaster-General at Washington, thereby entailing vexatious and disastrous delay, as well as exceeding cost and trouble in securing a hearing and in obtaining a reversal of the decision.

But more: Such a reversal would, in most cases, be exceedingly difficult, as this bill's provisions are so broad, that, strictly interpreted, it would exclude from the mails nine-tenths of our great newspapers and magazines, because, though ostensibly published as purveyors of news and general information, they virtually are published for advertisers; they derive nine-tenths of their net income from their advertising columns, and may be even published at an actual production-loss in order to secure the

Continued on page 13.



THE DOOR WAS OPENED AND TWO OLD GENTLEMEN CAME IN.

EMMETT'S GIRL.[*]

BY SEWARD W. HOPKINS,

Author of "In the China Sea," "Two Gentlemen of Hawaii," "Darby, the Bear-Hunter of Alaska," etc.

["EMMETT'S GIRL" was commenced in No. 8. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the News-dealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALLMENTS.

[In order that *new* readers of the *Ledger* may begin with the following installment of this story, and understand it just the same as though they had read it all from the beginning, we here give a synopsis of that portion of it which has already been published: Grace Emmett, a beautiful young typewriter, and Amy Wattleson, the younger daughter of James Wattleson, a rich old widower, love George Ellington, the young bookkeeper of the New York banking firm of Hildreth & Son. Amy's arts prove successful, and when Ellington asks Mr. Wattleson for Amy's hand he is stoutly refused because of his limited means. Amy tells her father that she will marry Ellington with or without his consent, and he threatens to disinherit her. The lovers meet at a ball given by Mrs. Dumphrey in her Madison Avenue mansion, and while they are alone in the conservatory Amy imparts to Ellington a plan she has conceived. Portions of their conversation are overheard by Gideon Welles, a cunning meddler of small income and increasing debts, who expects to marry money in the person of Amy's elder sister, Helen, who detests him. He hears Amy say that her father had that day drawn ninety thousand dollars in cash from Hildreth's bank. Next morning Mrs. Kent, Wattleson's widowed sister and housekeeper, finds her brother murdered in his bed and his secretary rifled, and Amy is missing. Detective Tubbs finds a gold stud on the bed beside the body, and Helen recognizes this as one of a set of three she had given to her brother Tom, who, having been cast off by his father seven years before, had enlisted in the army and is stationed on Governor's Island. Tom is arrested. Almost at the same time, Ellington and Amy, having eloped after the ball, are arrested on their arrival in Philadelphia on the charge of murder and robbery.]

CHAPTER VIII.

A SURPRISE FOR MR. TUBBS.

TOWARD noon friends began to call at the house to offer their sympathy and assistance. The first to arrive was Mrs. Dumphrey. When the carriage of the leader of society rolled up to the curb, the undertaker was just putting up the somber mark of mourning on the bell-knob, and Mrs. Kent stood on the step conversing with him.

Mrs. Dumphrey ran lightly up the steps and grasped Mrs. Kent's hands.

"My dear Mrs. Kent," she said, "I have just heard of this horrible affair, and came in all haste to you! *You* don't need to be told that I feel for you, or that I am anxious to help you. You know it before it is said. Can I help you any? Is there anything I can do? Anything?"

"I thank you, Mrs. Dumphrey," replied Mrs. Kent, "but I know of nothing now. Yet it does one good to feel the hand of a true friend at a time like this."

"And Helen—my poor, poor favorite! Where is she?"

"Helen is prostrated with grief," said Mrs. Kent. "You will find her in her room. Will you go up?"

"Oh, yes, indeed!" was the reply.

Mrs. Dumphrey mounted the stairs, and, being familiar with the premises, found her way, without difficulty, to Helen's room.

"My dear, dear Helen!" she said, kissing the pale lips, and drawing the beautiful face close to her own.

"Oh, Mrs. Dumphrey!" cried Helen, sobbing.

"There, there, dear. I know, I know," said Mrs. Dumphrey, soothingly. "It is horrible—and sad—but you must not give way like this!"

"Oh, I am not strong to battle with such grief as this! Everything seems so dark and threatening. Father lying dead; Amy, my poor, misguided sister, gone, and George Ellington, whom we all liked and trusted, and now—and—they have arrested my brother Tom!"

"Tom!"

"Yes. You knew Tom, did you not?"

"Oh, yes, dear! I remember Tom, with his handsome face and fast ways. He is in my brother's command."

"Yes?"

"But why have they arrested him? I thought everybody blamed George Ellington?"

"Oh, Mrs. Dumphrey, the detective found a stud in my father's bed that was one of a set of three that I gave Tom as a Christmas present four years ago! He showed it to me, and I fainted. Then he insisted on knowing the truth, and I had to tell him. Then Tom happened to come in, in reply to a telegram that Aunt Sarah sent him, and he was immediately arrested. Now I hear they have arrested George and Amy in Philadelphia, and are bringing them here. Oh, how miserable it is! So black! So horrible!"

"But tut, child! We have no proof against any of them yet. *I* don't believe that Tom or George or Amy knew anything about the—the crime."

"Oh, thank you, kindest of friends! You are the first to say so. I hope it is true! I hope it is true!"

Mrs. Dumphrey talked a few minutes more in a motherly way, for she dearly loved the beautiful girl who was now bowed down with grief, and finally persuaded her to go downstairs, and sought in various ways to infuse a little cheerfulness into the misery-laden home.

Soon after this Mr. Hildreth and his son, the bankers, called. Old Mr. Hildreth seemed much shaken by the dreadful news he had heard, and stepped from his carriage in a slow, painful way.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Kent," he said, "if I seem intrusive. The terrible news of the events of the morning reached us only a short time ago, and I made all haste to get here to offer my services, if there is any way in which I may be able to help you.

"They tell me that young Ellington is suspected of the murder," continued the banker. "George has been with our house a good many years. He is most trustworthy. I cannot believe this of him. It will kill his poor old father. Mr. Ellington and I have been friends since boyhood. I shall call on him. He has no money. He will, of course, want his boy defended. I feel it my duty, Mrs. Kent, to see that George gets fair play in this matter."

"Good for you, Mr. Hildreth!" said Mrs. Dumphrey. "*I* don't believe George Ellington did it. A man need not be a murderer just because he loves a girl and runs away with her."

"No, no. Well, we shall soon see. I trust—no doubt—the guilty parties will be found. Now I must go to poor old Ellington. My heart bleeds for him. Come, Arthur."

After them came Gideon Welles.

"Mrs. Kent and my dear Miss Wattleson," he said, with a low bow, "the sad events of this morning have brought me to you with all dispatch, to offer my sympathy and assistance. As everybody knows, the detective service of New York is not perfect. You may be aware that I have some little talent in that way myself. Should you desire that talent to be used in your service, I should be most happy."

Helen smiled sadly.

"It seems to me," she said, "that the detective ability we have had has been beyond comparison. It has succeeded in involving my brother in this awful thing, and has also caused the arrest of George and Amy."

"Your brother!" said Gideon, seemingly struck with this portion of Helen's remark.

"Yes—Tom. He is a soldier, you know. Papa had sent him away from home, and threatened to disinherit him. That will be used against him, no doubt."

"*You* do not believe him guilty, of course?" said Gideon.

"I don't," said Mrs. Kent.

"Nor I," said Mrs. Dumphrey.

"It is hard to believe Tom guilty of such a thing," said Helen. "He was always foolish, and led a free, fast life, which incensed papa against him. But I don't think Tom ever was very *wicked*."

"Frequently in these cases," said Mr. Welles, "there is a slight and seemingly unimportant clue overlooked, which, if properly applied as a link, however small, might complete a chain or lead to a new line of search. Now, if there is no objection, I would like to look over the premises—to satisfy myself that nothing has been overlooked."

Helen shuddered. What was there, she thought, that had not been dragged up into the light?

"There can be no objection," said Mrs. Kent; "but I agree with Helen—the ground has been well covered."

Gideon thanked her, and went upstairs.

At the same moment Mr. Tubbs appeared, coming in by way of the front door. He looked up, and saw Mr. Welles. Gideon, having his back toward the door, did not see who had come in. It would not have mattered if he had, for he did not know Mr. Tubbs.

Gideon went up into Amy's room, and examined that. Then he came out, and Mr. Tubbs, who was hiding on the stairs, ducked his head so as not to be discovered. Gideon went into the bath-room and peered around. He closely examined the floor, and to Mr. Tubbs it seemed as if he was looking for something—some certain object.

Gideon then went into Mr. Wattleson's room, from which he soon reappeared, and now he espied the open window, and from this he could see the ends of the ladder still sticking above the kitchen roof. After looking about a bit, Mr. Welles clambered out of the window, stepped across the extension roof and let himself down by way of the ladder—to the ground.

Mr. Tubbs stood alone in the hall, perplexed.

"What the dickens is *that* bloke after?" he said to himself. "He's looking for something, and *he* knows what. If he finds it, ten to one, nobody else will ever know it. I'll watch *him*."

Mr. Tubbs, having half uttered this resolve, went downstairs again and sought Mrs. Kent.

"Pardon me," he said, "but I'd like to

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know who the person was who went upstairs a few minutes ago?"

"A servant?"

"I don't think so. It was a man—evidently a gentleman."

"Oh, that was Mr. Welles."

"Who's he?"

"A friend."

"Business friend of Mr. Wattleson?"

"No, not at all; a social friend."

"Ah! You are *sure* he had no business connection with Mr. Wattleson?"

"Perfectly sure."

"Is there any possibility that Mr. Welles could have known of the ninety thousand dollars being in the house?"

Mrs. Kent stared.

"I know of no way he could have known it."

"Well, all right. Keep mum, madam, please. Don't let on I have spoken to you about him."

And Mr. Tubbs hurried away.

CHAPTER IX.

MISS GRACE EMMETT.

On Nassau Street, not far from the Sub-Treasury Building, there is a fourteen-story building, much occupied by lawyers. The shades in the windows of a front suite of rooms on the tenth floor of this building were embellished by the words, in plain, black letters, "Thornton & Ormsby." There was nothing to indicate the nature of the business carried on by Thornton & Ormsby, and, indeed, it made very little difference as to that, for the name itself could not be read by any pedestrian in New York, nor by any one else who did not happen to be on an equally high floor in some of the opposite buildings. The glass in the door which led to these offices bore the same name, in black, enameled letters.

The interior of the office was as plain and unostentatious as the sign. There was a small ante-room, in which, behind a railing, a typewriter—a wonderfully pretty girl—sat banging away at the unmusical keys, grinding out the dry, legal documents of her employers; for Thornton & Ormsby were lawyers, and so well known were they in New York that it was a matter of pride with them that they needed no advertising.

Beyond the ante-room occupied by the pretty clerk, were two other rooms, side by side, and over the door of one of these there was a small black word, "Thornton," while upon the ground, cloudy glass of the other, in gilded letters, was the name, "Gerald Ormsby."

The contrast in these two signs marked well the difference between the two men who composed the firm.

The door of Mr. Thornton's room opened, and a small, sharp-featured, keen-eyed old gentleman came out—a man who was at least sixty years old, and who seemed all bones and nerves. He wore steel-bowed spectacles, and his clothes were all black, even to his plain string necktie. He carried in his hand a legal paper.

"Gracie," he said, in a sharp, thin voice, "what have you done with the papers of Brown *versus* Chickering?"

"I have them here, Mr. Thornton," replied the pretty clerk, picking up the desired papers and handing them to her employer.

Mr. Thornton took them and looked sharply at Miss Emmett.

"You are a long time on that job."

"Yes, sir," said the girl, timidly. "I—I—don't feel very well to-day."

"Oh! Oh! Well, never mind. Take your time. Take a week—take a year—but for Heaven's sake don't get sick! Good gracious! What *would* we do?"

Mr. Thornton disappeared again into his den, and the other door opened. A man about thirty years old came out. Gerald Ormsby was a handsome man and dressed in the prevailing fashion.

"Any letters, Miss Emmett?" he asked.

"No, sir," she replied. "Only a paper for Mr. Thornton."

"Legal?"

"No—news."

"Oh! I am going out to lunch. Has Thornton been out yet?"

"No, sir."

"Look here. Eyes red! Been crying? That won't do. Look here, it's a fine day. Come up to the Astor House with me to lunch. It will cheer you up a bit."

Before she could answer, Mr. Thornton's door was again thrown open, and the old man came out.

"Er—Ormsby, I want you. That confounded fool of a Chickering has upset my plans completely. I told him to hold his tongue, and we would bring him out all right; but the idiot has talked, and practically convicted himself, when I had just got things in shape to prove an *alibi*. Why the deuce does a fool commit a crime? A wise man is a client *we* don't often get. A criminal and a fool—terms, to my mind, synonymous. By the way, you are going to lunch. I'll go along. We can talk it over."

Ormsby's countenance did not change at this blow to *his* little plan, and the two great criminal lawyers walked out together.

When they had gone Miss Emmett dropped her face in her hands and trembled and sobbed for some minutes. Then, restraining and pulling herself together by an effort of her will, she applied herself to her work with such vigor that a half hour had slipped by before she knew it.

Chancing to look up, she saw what time it was, and gathering up her papers, placed them out of the way. Then she touched a slide in the typewriter-table, and the clanging machine slipped out of sight, leaving a plain-topped table before her.

Miss Emmett rose, and from a closet brought forth a neat little alligator-skin bag, which she opened. From this she took some sandwiches, some cake—her own baking—a small dish of preserves, pickles, a napkin, and a tin box of coffee. Now the resources of the office of Thornton & Ormsby began to be developed. From a corner she brought a little gas-stove, and attaching the pipe to a gas-jet over her desk, lighted it, and proceeded to make coffee in a shining tin coffee pot she took from the closet.

A gentle tap at the door was answered by "Come in," and a girl appeared, bringing with her a bag similar to Miss Emmett's.

"Oh, Grace," she exclaimed, "the coffee smells extra good to-day."

"Because you are hungry," was the answer.

"No, it is good, really. My, what a layout! See what it is to have a mother who keeps boarders. All the good things, eh?"

Miss Emmett busied herself further in bringing out some cups, saucers, spoons, sugar and milk.

"Both out?" asked the visitor, nodding toward the doors of the private rooms.

"Yes. They have been gone a half hour."

"Mercy sakes! Let's get through in a hurry. I couldn't bear to have that handsome Gerald Ormsby see me eating lunch."

"He has seen me eating mine often enough," said Miss Emmett, "and it did not spoil my appetite."

"Oh, he's in *love* with *you*."

Grace turned red and white. She put her hand to her head in a quick, spasmodic way.

"Don't," she said.

Her visitor saw that something was wrong.

"Oh, Grace, what's the matter?" she cried. "You've been crying."

"Nothing much. My head," she said, when, in truth, she should have said her heart.

Grace not being in a very talkative mood, the lunch was soon over, and the visitor, after helping wash the few dishes used, departed. No sooner was the door closed behind her than Grace again gave way to tears.

"Oh, I must stop!" she said. "I will make myself sick, and for what? A man who did not love me—who loved another—who, probably, is married to her by now—who—but—but— Oh, I know he didn't do it! He couldn't. He is too noble! Too manly! My darling! Oh, I may call him so when no one hears. I loved him so. I loved him so."

The door was opened, and two old gentlemen came in. One of these was a portly, well-dressed and prosperous-looking man; and the other was a tall, thin, white-haired man, with tears coursing down his cheeks, and the evidence of bitterest anguish in his face. Grace started.

"Is Thornton in?" asked the portly gentleman.

"No, sir," replied Miss Emmett. "He is out to lunch."

"Ormsby?"

"He is with Mr. Thornton, sir."

"Say what time they would be back?"

"I expect them in now—almost any moment, sir. They did not say what time they would be back, but, usually, if they intend to be gone long they tell me."

"Very good. We will wait for them."

"Yes, sir. Won't you sit down, Mr. Hildreth?"

"Yes, yes. Here, Ellington, old friend, take a chair. Thornton is sure to be in soon. He's a great lawyer, Thornton is. He may see a way out of all this. There is some clue lacking. Some mistake. It *may* be some diabolical plot, you know."

"Oh, I know it is so, Mr. Hildreth," said Mr. Ellington. "My boy never harmed any one. *He* couldn't do this awful thing. But they've arrested him. They'll bring him home like a felon. Oh, my son! My son!"

Poor Grace turned away to hide her emotion.

"I know, I know. Cheer up, Ellington," said the banker. "Being arrested is not much. It isn't *all*, you know. Hear what I have to say. If George *is* arrested—if all the disgrace in the world is heaped upon him, if he gets out of this I'll stand by him. Hildreth & Son know a good man when they see one. His place shall be held for him. He shall not suffer by this. Oh, no."

"Oh, thank you, thank you! The utmost gratitude of an old man is yours."

"Yes, I know. Here comes Thornton now."

CHAPTER X.

COLONEL TOPLEIGH.

The Colonel of Artillery on Governor's Island was a busy man. He was an acknowledged expert on all subjects relating to attack and defense. He knew more about the subject of coast defense than any other man in the army. Colonel Topleigh had, in his cozy headquarters, a library of expensive books on the subject of war from the pens of the experts of every nation. He had a laboratory, where he continually experimented with various kinds of chemicals and explosives. He was a rigid disciplinarian, and his batteries were the best drilled and best equipped in the service. He was the handsomest man on parade. His boots were the shiniest and his uniform the best fitting. As a swordsman he ranked among the best, and the strength of his arm was a matter of legend among his men.

With all these honorable things to his credit, the Colonel was still on the sunny side of forty, and those who did not know him well, or who were not aware of his position as an authority on attack and defense, wondered how he had won his promotion so young, when men who had been classmates of his at West Point were still lieutenants or brevet-captains. But those who wondered did not know that even at West Point Cadet Topleigh could instruct some of the instructors on certain points closely pertaining to modern warfare.

The Colonel sat in his library, smoking a cigar and examining the model of a newly invented disappearing gun-carriage which had been brought to him for his approval. On the table near him lay the model of a new rapid-firing gun, the inventor of which claimed wonderful things.

A younger man, in the fatigue uniform of a staff officer, sauntered in.

"At it again, Topleigh?" he said banteringly.

"Always, Captain; always," replied the Colonel, hardly raising his eyes from the model. "Sit down and smoke a cigar. There they are on the table."

"I will, Colonel. You always do manage to have the best cigars in the place. By the way, that's a neat-looking arrangement you have there."

The Colonel held the model off and surveyed it.

"Yes," he said. "Neat-looking, but not at all dangerous."

"The carriage?"

"The gun—the whole thing. Nothing but a toy."

"Possible?"

"Fact."

He now placed the carriage on the table, and put the brass gun on it, in position as if for firing.

"Now you see," he said, "where the fault lies. There is a structural weakness, a flimsiness about it that cannot be remedied in its present form. It looks pretty, and would do for quick firing at close range. But the service is full of that kind. What we want now is something that will carry accurately a long distance. Particularly is this true when it comes to naval warfare or coast defense. Let me illustrate this. Suppose a fleet of foreign ships should come up the bay—the lower bay. We can reach them with our heavy guns. Very well. What kind of a reach is it? Of course, you don't need to be told that a projectile from a gun does not travel in a straight line. It describes a curve, or what we call the trajectory. Now the greater the explosive force, powder impulse or charge, the flatter or straighter this curve or trajectory will be. Now with our great, booming, noisy, powder-consuming guns there is a waste of force. We have not yet reached perfection in the art of utilizing *all* the explosion. What is the result? A gun that will send a ball eight miles must first send it sailing up into the clouds. It drops down at the target. Now suppose there are three or four of the enemy's ships in line with us, say equi-distant apart. If our projectile fails to hit one and barely misses, it falls harmlessly into the water a little short of or a little beyond the ship, and not near one of the others. On the other hand, given a gun capable of sustaining a greater explosive force, and an explosive that will produce a *greater expansion* or projectory impulse, our projectiles, instead of describing so high a curve, will fly straighter to the mark, and if it passes over one ship, will, by its greater momentum and slower fall, be more likely to strike the ship beyond. In short, the more we increase the *impulse* the more we increase the chances of striking an enemy, and therefore the enemy's 'dangerous space' is correspondingly enlarged."

"Very true, Colonel. You seem to have the question at heart. Now may I ask—"

The captain's question remained unuttered. There came a sharp rap at the door.

"Come in," said the Colonel.

An orderly came rushing in, panting and out of breath.

"Colonel!" he gasped, "Wattleson's arrested for murder!"

"Who? Wattleson of Second Battery? What was it? A fight in quarters?"

"No, sir. He's arrested for killing his father!"

"What! His father? Why, he—why, he—couldn't! It wasn't in him. He's a daredevil, breakneck scallawag, I'll grant, but there's good in him. What are the particulars? Did they take him here?"

"No, sir. All I know is this: Wattleson was sent for this morning, and obtained leave of absence to go home. When he got there he was arrested for the murder. And robbery, too, sir. Ninety thousand in cash gone."

"But where was Wattleson all night? Wasn't he here, where he ought to have been?"

"It appears not, sir. He was away on leave all night, and returned at six A. M. The telegram reached here at seven."

"Away all night? That looks bad. I'm sorry for that."

"There's worse, sir. A sister eloped the same time, sir."

"What!" roared the Colonel. "Not *Helen* Wattleson?"

"No, sir. Amy, I think the name is. Eloped with a man named Ellington."

"Ah! Ellington; Hildreth's bookkeeper. Now I think of it, I saw them together at my sister's ball last night. Why—hang it—what time did this murder and robbery and all the devilment take place?"

"Don't know, sir."

Colonel Topleigh mused a few minutes.

"Excuse me, Captain," he said, rising hastily from his chair. "I know Miss Helen Wattleson, and her aunt, Mrs. Kent, very well. Now, if her father is murdered, her brother under arrest, and her sister fled, she must need friends. I'll go to her. Most likely my sister, Mrs. Dumphrey, will be there, and I may be of some service. I'll see Wattleson, too. I can't believe he did it."

"Go ahead, Colonel! If *I* was in trouble, there's no one I'd sooner have round than you."

In a remarkably short time, Colonel Topleigh was at the headquarters of the Commanding General, and with unlimited leave granted him, rushed on board the boat for New York, and in thirty minutes was going uptown on an elevated train, which he roundly anathematized for being so slow.

Having reached the Wattleson house, the handsome Colonel strode up the steps, and finding the bell-pull disconnected, he opened the door and walked in.

The first person he saw was his sister, Mrs. Dumphrey.

"Oh!" she said. "You heard of it! I thought you'd stand by us."

"Us?"

"Us. I'm in the thick of it. Hush! Here come Helen and Mrs. Kent."

Mrs. Kent showed plainly the struggle she was constantly making to appear calm. Poor Helen, pale, beautiful, and tear-stained, seemed ready to collapse.

"My dear Mrs. Kent," said the Colonel, "I have come as fast as I could, after learning of this great trouble, to see if I could be of any assistance to you."

"You are very kind, Colonel," replied Mrs. Kent, "but there is nothing—"

"The fact is, Sid," said Mrs. Dumphrey—the Colonel's name was Sidney—"that the horrors have multiplied upon them so they don't know which way to turn. What with Tom in irons, Amy coming back under arrest, and the rest of it, they are in a frenzy of grief."

"Just so. I presumed as much," said the Colonel, sitting down. "Now tell me all about this miserable business."

In broken sentences, interrupted and punctuated with tears and sobs, they related to him the course of events, even to the mysterious action of Gideon Welles.

"That cad!" exclaimed the Colonel. "Did he offer his valuable services as a detective?"

"Indeed he did," said Mrs. Kent. "He asked permission to look over the premises, and did so, thereby arousing the distrust of Mr. Tubbs."

"Tubbs?"

"The detective."

"Oh! He might well arouse the suspicion of Mr. Tubbs. But now: Of course, you want some one to see Tom. There may be a loophole out of this. The mere finding of a stud can't convict a man. He may be able to prove an *alibi*—no doubt he will. I'll go and see him. Then I'll see Amy when she comes. You will let me take hold and—and represent you, won't you?"

As he turned to go, a new thought seemed to strike him.

"By the way," he said, "do you know if Mr. Wattleson made any memorandum of the bank-notes that were stolen—the numbers, I mean?"

"I—I—never thought of that," said Mrs. Kent.

"No one else has asked that," said Helen; "not even Mr. Tubbs."

The Colonel's lip curled.

"While I am gone, you look for it," he said, and with this he was off.

He found Tom Wattleson in an ugly frame of mind, pacing to and fro in his cell.

"Well, what's this I hear, sir?" demanded the Colonel, sternly, when he had been admitted to the prisoner.

"Good Heaven, Colonel!" exclaimed Tom. "Tell me what you know. Here I am seized upon and thrust in here on a charge of murdering my own father. It's horrible! It's an outrage!"

"It's evident there's outrage somewhere," said the Colonel. "But before we go into that, answer me one question. Where were you all last night?"

Wattleson stared—then hung his head.

"You hesitate. Think well over this. Where were you between three and six this morning?"

"I cannot tell you," answered Wattleson.

"Then you convict yourself."

"It's a lie! I had no more to do with my father's death than you had. I was in New York, I'll admit, but I cannot and will not tell where I was."

"If you are innocent, your resolve is mere madness. If you persist in it, you will bring yourself to the electric chair. The police will be desperate in a case like this."

Wattleson sank down upon the edge of his cot and buried his face in his hands.

"I can't help it, Colonel. I swear before the Almighty that what I say is true."

"I don't believe you. No man would convict himself by silence, if a word from him could establish an *alibi*."

Wattleson sprang to his feet and faced the Colonel.

"Colonel Topleigh," he said, his voice calm and low, "I *could* establish an *alibi* if I chose to speak and clear myself of the horrible charge, but in the effort to clear myself the fair name of a beautiful woman would be dragged in the mire and her reputation blasted forever. No, no. Let them do with me as they will, I shall not speak the word that will betray the confidence of one who loves me. Better death than *that*."

"By Jove! Boy, I glory in that spirit if what you say is true!" said the Colonel. "But the stud! The stud!"

"My sister Helen gave me a set of studs like the one Tubbs found, but they have not been mine for some time. One day, when I was hard up and needed money badly, I sold them to a friend."

"That friend! His name?"

"George Ellington. He was one—the only one—of my old acquaintances who stuck true. He bought them, and gave me a fair price, too."

"Bless my stars!" said the Colonel. "We are getting at it. I believe you, boy. Your sister Helen does not believe you guilty. I'll stand by you. The question is, will any one else believe you?"

With these words, and a pressure of the hand, the Colonel left, and Wattleson sat gloomily pondering upon his chances.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 11.]

A DANGEROUS POSTAL BILL.

Continued from page 10.

large circulation necessary for profitable advertising rates.

To illustrate: The *New York World* is now sold to newsmen for one-half cent per copy. As each paper is from 16 to 22 or more pages in size, it will be understood how it comes under the ban of this law, which expressly says:

> "Nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to admit to the second-class rate any regular publication designed primarily for advertising purposes, or for free circulation, or for circulation at nominal rates."

The *World's* price to readers is merely "nominal;" it is "designed primarily for advertising purposes;" and, by this extraordinary prerogative conferred on the postmaster, he can deny the *World* the use of the United States mails at second-class rates of postage.

Such permissive power, and such possible construction of law, should command the attention of every Member who may be called upon to pass judgment on this reprehensible invasion of the rights of the press.

DAMAGE TO BUSINESS.

Bill 4566, in its entirety, makes little account of the fact that the business of the country is inextricably involved with the operations of the United States Post Office. The commerce between the States, the dissemination not only of newspapers and books, but of mailable merchandise to even the minor towns and villages in the United States, new and old, is by the agency of the Post Office, and the people now are obtaining vast numbers of articles, indispensable to their comfort and enjoyment, in this way. Hence, to restrict or cut off any of the privileges conceded to legitimate advertising mediums, is an untimely interference with established methods of business—a blow at the profits and requirements of business men, and a serious injury to thousands of families scattered from one end of the country to the other, where the post offices are the centers of public convenience, and the principal means of communication with the great cities and supply depots of manufactured articles—the only means, in truth, of vast numbers of towns and sections.

In framing this proposed law, its authors have lost sight of this great and important consideration—that the post office is rapidly becoming *much more* than the carrier of letters and a medium of correspondence. Every observant person knows that the mails are now being superceded by the almost ubiquitous telegraph and telephone to a surprising degree; and that, concomitant with this significant change, the United States Post is becoming the carrier of merchandise to an extent far exceeding anything ever before known in the history of that general benefit institution. Were this feature of common carrier eliminated, or even hampered in its usefulness, the revenues would shrink in a way that would astonish the originators of this new Postal Tax Law—for so it may be termed—and a deficit from the shrinking volume of correspondence, consequent on restrictions placed on the advertising which sends this fourth-class matter through the mails, would reach far beyond the dimensions at present chargeable to all other classes of mail matter.

DIRECT SOURCES OF POSTAL REVENUE.

To the enormous business accruing to the Post Office from the circulation of sample copies, extra editions, trade papers, newspapers, the religious and secular weeklies, and the now immensely circulated monthly magazines, particular attention should be given by the intelligent lawmaker. Almost all of these issues are largely devoted to advertising, and which, but for this advertising, could only be furnished to the public at *greatly enhanced prices*, a fact well established in trade experience. The advertisements, in many cases, are so devised that their value to the advertiser is determined by the returns of sealed letters through the mails from parties reached by these advertisements, so that, unless the adequate return is made by correspondence which pays first-class rates of postage, the newspaper, trade paper or magazine, loses its patronage; it *must* bring to its advertiser these essential responses by letter mail, or they cease to use it as an advertising medium; correspondence is the direct result which they demand and expect. Therefore, to the mere advertising features of our countless publications the Post Office Department owes such a proportion of its revenues that the undisguised intent of this bill to discriminate against advertising is a direct blow at its own income. These returns from advertising cover not only an immense correspondence, but, as indicated above, stupendous quantities of fourth-class matter ordered and sent by mail, all of which nets the Department (see Report 260 p. 1) 8 cents per pound *profit.* Would not any honest system of bookkeeping place this profit, in large per cent., to the credit of the advertising done in second-class publications, and, therefore, to second-class mail matter itself?

Yet further: Publishers of many of our principal weeklies, religious and secular, spend tens of thousands of dollars for postal cards and postage stamps in the course of business in merely soliciting subscriptions by mail and answering applicants. Millions of sample copies are distributed by hand from house to house which never pass through the mails at all, but, following such a distribution, there is, of course, an enormous correspondence at full letter rates. For example: In one case of a distribution of sample copies conjointly by mail and by hand, the New York *Ledger* expended over two thousand dollars for postal cards and postage stamps for correspondence growing out of this one distribution; in another case the Optimus Company expended in one year nearly double the amount for letter postage as for postage on second-class matter; and in the particularized instance, cited in Report 260, pp. 6 and 7—that of the special number of the *Youth's Companion*, of Boston—the returns to the Government of actual postages paid, in connection with that particular issue, netted a profit instead of the there assumed heavy loss.

These representative instances—for such they are—serve to enforce this insistence: That any restriction of the use of the mails for sample copies, or supplements, or advertising sheets, is directly to the detriment of postal revenues, and therefore inconsiderate, impolitic and unjust.

EXCESSIVE COST OF THE POSTAL SYSTEM.

In Report No. 260, accompanying this bill, there occurs the following paragraph:

> "Still there is not a sane business man in the country who has given the matter any thought, but what knows that the Post Office Department could be operated by private individuals on our present appropriation, and return a net profit of from $30,000,000 to $40,000,000 per year."

This is an extraordinary statement, demanding more than cursory consideration. If it be true, then there assuredly is a wide scope for the exercise of the pruning-knife in the outlays and expenses incurred in the administration of the Post Office. If, as the Report admits, *double the amount* is spent in excess of what is necessary in the ordinary way of business for transporting and distributing the mails, there is a demand for reform far surpassing any urgency for increasing the rates of postage on any class of mailable matter. If the people of this country are paying an exorbitant and outrageous price for the services of the Post Office, it seems little less than sheer robbery to increase postal rates, or, under the specious plea of *economy*, to place new and grievous exactions on publishers and press.

Will the enactment of this bill increase this revenue? All experience goes to establish the fact that higher rates diminish, in a geometrical ratio, the use of the post as a medium of exchange, and lessen the revenue in a corresponding ratio; especially will this ensue when it is made evident that this bill legislates out of existence one-half of the trade periodicals in the country. If economy is the one essential to perfect our postal system and make it self-sustaining, then why not abolish the expensive star routes, the costly extra fast mail-train service, the subsidies for speedy ocean mail carriage, the tremendous mass of free and franked matter which streams steadily through the Post—things which concern less immediately the masses of the people, and which are the logical application of the principles embodied in this bill?

That there is no such ground in the loss to the Post Office by the carriage of this second-class mail matter, as is claimed by the authors of this billl, is proved by the fact that all the principal express companies entering Chicago are now carrying the same matter for one cent a pound. This new express rate is now in effect, and takes in all the country west of the Ohio and Pennsylvania State lines. What a rebuke, then, is this business fact to the assumption of a direct deficit from the carriage of the very matter on which the expresses make rates that net an income!

The activity of the express companies in seeking to make arrangements with publishers at rates somewhat better than the present cost of second-class mail matter, shows how thoroughly alive they are to the advantages which this Bill, if enacted, will confer upon them.

REACTION AGAINST CHEAP POSTAGE.

This bill is a reaction against cheap postage and *special legislation in the interest of express companies.* It reverts to a past condition of public convenience, public taste and public needs. All legislation hitherto has been in advance, not only to meet and fulfill new conditions, but absolutely to create them in the interest of advancing intelligence. The law of March, 1879, was such an act. There was a pronounced call for literature in cheaper forms; the best works of the best authors were then selling at prices prohibitory to all save the rich; the need was for a form of publication which would not only be sold at a low cost to the public, but which could be cheaply transmitted all over the country. The lawmakers took cognizance of this; they fully understood the conditions, and by the act of March, 1879, held the mails open to this new class of periodicals. These issues called libraries, complying with all the requirements of periodicals, quickly sprang into an enormous popularity, and thereafter the works of Cooper, Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Gilmore Simms, Captain Marryat and hundreds of other good writers were scattered by thousands in the homes of the farmer and the artisan, by the Post Office, throughout the land.

To make up the deficiency caused by the necessity of maintaining many hundreds of post-offices and post routes which do not pay expenses, and for subsidies and excessive charges for rail and steamer transportation, this reactionary bill would impose an onerous postal rate on the literature of the people, would lay a heavy hand on the organs of commercial intercourse, and confer a dangerous power of censorship of the press upon the postal authorities.

VALUE OF POSTAL SYSTEM TO THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

The Chairman of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, by his admission as quoted above, from his Report, tacitly acknowledges that the Post Office Department and system are managed in an unbusiness-like manner, due, no doubt, to methods and conditions which are incident to the Government's control; but, as the service is, in the main, thoroughly satisfactory, if it does cost more than if operated for profit by private individuals, public sentiment is strongly in favor of sustaining it. That is evident; and, as representatives of large commercial interests, we admit that the system and service is necesssry to the prosperity of these interests and for the greatest good to the greatest number of our people in all sections of the Union. But, as such representatives, we most urgently protest against this attempt to rehabilitate the revenues of the system by this wholly inadequate and inconsiderate measure, and ask of every Member of the House: Considering the excellence of the law, as it now exists, under which the publishing interests of the country have so prospered, and will continue to prosper, is it not infinitely better to let well enough alone than to enact this disastrous and disturbing substitute for the present law?

A BILL TO LEGISLATE THOUSANDS OUT OF EMPLOYMENT.

The enactment of this bill will throw out of employment thousands of working men and women now engaged in manufacturing and circulating periodicals. It will seriously depress the allied trades of paper-making and press-building. It will reduce one-half the business in the sale of newspapers and periodicals. A New York paper-maker, the head of one of the largest houses, estimates the loss to the paper mills of New England, in consequence of the reduction in the circulation of periodicals, which will certainly follow the enactment of this bill, at 100,000 tons. He says it will be between 100,000 and 150,000 tons. This seems like an enormous figure, but the cheapening of white paper has so stimulated its use and has so swollen the size and weight of all periodicals, daily, weekly and monthly, that it is probably a conservative estimate of the decline in the product of white paper. As paper is the first and cheapest necessity of the printer who employs skilled labor in every department, the enormous reduction of the wages of labor which must ensue from this sweeping change will be evident to the meanest capacity. Such a blow cannot be struck at a prosperous industry without causing widespread suffering and disaster. The alarm which the threat of this legislation has created is already felt in the withholding of orders for thousands of tons.

GENERAL RESULTS.

It will deprive the public of a literature to which it has become accustomed, and which it relies upon as the source of much of its recreation and instruction. It will create confusion in the Postal Service through the difficulty in determining what is a periodical; it will probably result in an absolute loss of money to the Government, as the deficit caused by the transportation of these serial issues is, as we have shown, more than compensated by the immense correspondence by letter, postal cards, and other communications rendered necessary by the transaction of this business.

It discriminates against the people residing in the remoter States and Territories, to whose benefit the United States Postal Service was primarily devised, and for whom it exists to-day.

It will thus largely enhance the cost of literature in all forms, as the competition of the library and subscription periodicals has reduced the price of all books, bound and unbound.

To this presentation of our objections to House Bill 4566, and to the deductions which follow therefrom, we most respectfully direct your attention; and we ask from members the consideration due to a matter of such vital importance to vast business interests and to the well-being of individuals and homes on whose intelligence rest the very foundations of the Republic.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 25th, 1896.

ORVILLE J. VICTOR,
T. ALFRED VERNON,
JOHN ELDERKIN,

Committee appointed at the Meeting of Publishers held at New York, February 10th, 1896.

◆

EYES AND COLD WATER.

The aquatic furore has become so general that for the simple reason that cold water is a pure, natural product, it is claimed to be a universal and beneficial application. Arsenic is a pure, natural and simple product; so is prussic acid, as obtained from a peach kernel. A single drop of tobacco oil will kill a cat or dog in five minutes. Many persons are daily ruining their eyes by opening them in cold water in the morning. Cold water will harden and roughen the hands, and much more will it do so to the manifold more delicate covering of the eye; or the eye will, in self-defense, become scaly in the manner of a fish, that is, the coats of the eye will thicken, constituting a species of cataract, which must impair the sight. That water, cold and harsh as it is, should be applied to the eye for curative purposes in place of that soft, warm, lubricating fluid which Nature manufactures just for such purposes, indicates great mental obliquity. Water, when applied to the eyes, should be lukewarm, and even then it should be only applied by closing and flapping it against the lid with the hand. This cools the eye more rapidly than cold water does, and without the shock, while its soothing effect is delightful, washing out the yellow and other matter that may have accumulated overnight in half the time required by cold water.

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NOTICE TO OLD SUBSCRIBERS.

Watch the yellow label on the wrapper of your *Ledger*, as the date printed on it indicates the time your subscription expires. We will discontinue sending the *Ledger* at the expiration of your subscription. If you renew promptly you will not only insure your *Ledger* coming to you every week without delay, but it will be a great convenience and assistance to the publishers of the *Ledger* in keeping their subscription list.

HAUNTED HOUSES.

BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

All houses wherein men have lived and died
  Are haunted houses. Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide,
  With feet that make no sound upon the floors.
We meet them at the doorway, on the stair,
  Along the passages they come and go,
Impalpable impressions on the air,
  A sense of something moving to and fro.

There are more guests at table than the hosts
  Invited; the illuminated hall
Is thronged with quiet, inoffensive ghosts,
  As silent as the pictures on the wall.
The stranger at my fireside cannot see
  The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear;
He but perceives what is, while unto me
  All that has been is visible and clear.

We have no title deeds to house or lands;
  Owners and occupants of earlier dates
From graves forgotten stretch their dusty hands,
  And hold in mortmain still their old estates.
The spirit-world around this world of sense
  Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapors dense
  A vital breath of more ethereal air.

Our little lives are kept in equipoise
  By opposite attractions and desires;
The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
  And the more noble instinct that aspires.
These perturbations, this perpetual jar
  Of earthly wants, and aspirations high,
Come from the influence of an unseen star,
  An undiscovered planet in our sky.

And as the moon from some dark gate of cloud
  Throws o'er the sea a floating bridge of light,
Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd
  Into the realm of mystery and night—
So from the world of spirits there descends
  A bridge of light, connecting it with this,
O'er whose unsteady floor, that sways and bends,
  Wander our thoughts above the dark abyss.

◆

THE FREEZING OF GAS PIPES.

Much annoyance has been experienced on account of the freezing of gas pipes, especially in large buildings, tunnels and places where the pipes are necessarily somewhat exposed, and where there are unavoidable depressions which allow the vapor to condense. It is said that the introduction of alcohol vapor into the pipes is an effectual preventive.

According to experiments made during severe winter weather, the influence of alcohol vapor is felt at a distance of two miles and a half from the gasometer where the gas runs in an uninterrupted line. Upon passing through a wet meter, however, the alcohol vapor entirely disappears. An exceedingly small quantity of alcohol only is required, about 5 grammes of 95 per cent alcohol to a cubic meter of gas. Under unfavorable conditions, with a great deal of depression of pipes and extremely cold weather, the proportion of alcohol may be raised to 6 or 7 grammes. The alcohol has no effect whatever upon the heating or lighting power of the gas.

◆

The Household Department of the New York Ledger.

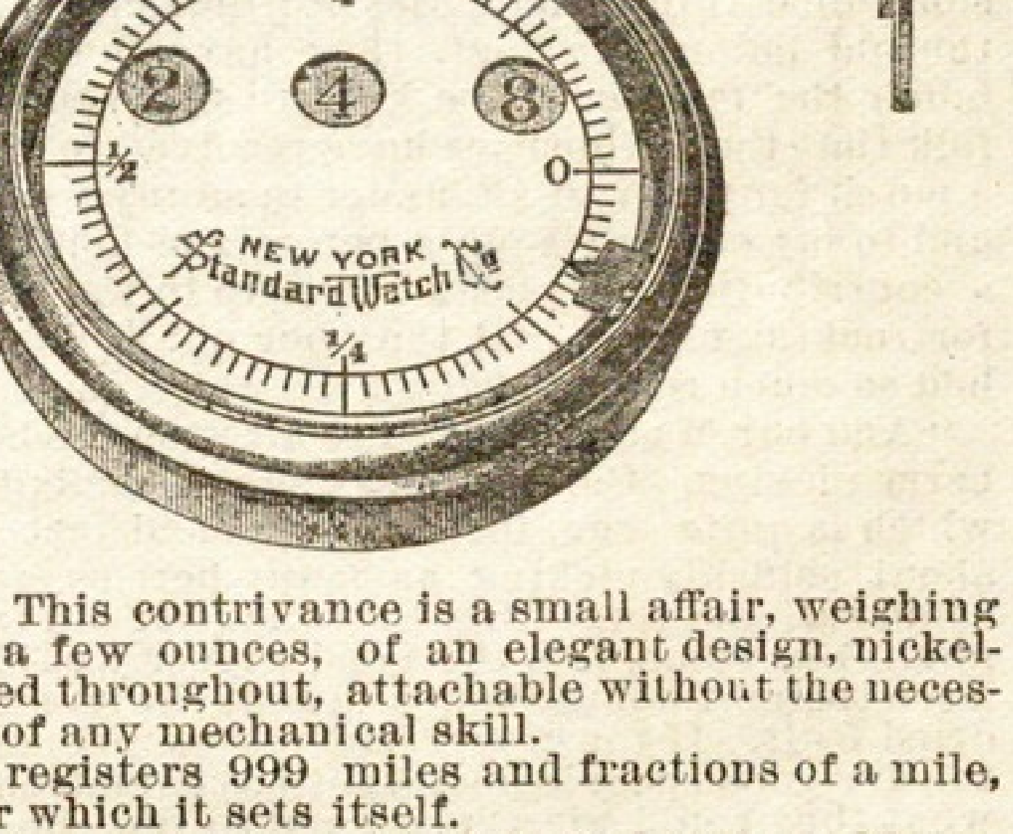
From time to time, when we can secure real bargains, we will offer them to the LEDGER readers in our Household Department. The following offer of a STANDARD CYCLOMETER FOR ONLY $1.00 is a sample of the kind of bargains we will give our readers.

The Standard Cyclometer, Postpaid, for $1.00 Only.

One of the chief elements of satisfaction in wheeling has always been an accurate knowledge of the distance covered.

We have a few of the same style cyclometers we sold for $2.00 in our offer of April 6, and we make a special offer of these for only **$1.00**, postpaid. They are exactly the same make as the cyclometer we offered in the issue of April 6. We obtained this small lot at a very low figure, and want our readers to benefit by it.

Prior to last season, a cyclometer has been so expensive that only wealthy bicycle riders have been able to afford this attachment to their wheel. The *Ledger* has made arrangements direct with the manufacturer of a simple, novel device, so cheap in price as to bring it within the reach of all. This contrivance is a small affair, weighing but a few ounces, of an elegant design, nickel-plated throughout, attachable without the necessity of any mechanical skill.


20 YARD UNITS
3/4
2
4
8
1/2
0
NEW YORK Standard Watch Co
1/4

It registers 999 miles and fractions of a mile, after which it sets itself.

This cyclometer will be mailed to any address, delivery guaranteed, for $1.00.

The only information which the person ordering need send is the diameter of his wheel. This cyclometer is only attachable to the safety wheel.

If the rider should meet with an accident and the cyclometer is broken, we will repair free of charge if stamps are enclosed for return postage.

Address all orders to
ROBERT BONNER'S SONS,
Ledger Building, - - New York City.

CHILDREN ALL OVER THE WORLD.

Little Maggie.

Little Maggie was brought up at the poorhouse. She had nothing to give any one but kindness, but she gave so much of that that every one loved her—the matron and the five old ladies who were obliged to live in the desolate old house on the hill, which had neither porch nor shade-tree.

Maggie used to run about to find things they had lost—spectacles and handkerchiefs, for instance. She buttoned their shoes and put up their hair, and whenever she could do anything nice for them she did it.

Poorhouse fare is very dry, and when blackberries were ripe Maggie used to beg the matron to let her go into the woods and pick some for the poor old ladies' tea. The matron said she might. And when Mr. Smith, the grocer, saw her filling her pail, he asked her what she was doing with so many, and she told him.

"Oh," said he, "I guess I'll have to give you sugar for them. They won't taste good without sugar, and I know what poorhouse providing is. Whenever you pick a mess of fruit, come to me for sugar." And when winter came he sent some bags of dried fruit and a box of sugar.

The poor old people could have told you how much better it made their bread and butter taste, and when Mr. Smith's good deed became known, the people at the dry-goods store remembered that they had some woolen goods, not very handsome or salable, but very comfortable for all that, and set the old ladies up in hoods, shawls, stockings and mittens for the winter.

It was summer again, and Maggie was pushing the matron's baby about in its wagon, when she saw a lady whom she knew by sight come out of her house and lock the door. She had a travelling-bag in her hand, and she stopped and looked about her at her pretty garden. The milk-man was just passing, and he said:

"Good afternoon, Miss Billings. Going away?"

"Yes, Mr. Brown," she answered, "I'm going for a month, and when I come back all my flowers will be dead. I'm sorry, for I do love my garden. If I had near neighbors, I could pay some of their boys to water them; but I'm too far off to do that. So good-bye to my posies."

When she was gone, Maggie went up to the fence and looked at the flowers.

"What a shame," she thought, "that they should be allowed to die!"

Then she remembered that after the old ladies had had tea and the matron's baby was asleep she never had much to do, and that she could run over before bedtime came and water the garden. There was a well and a cistern, and a pail stood handy. It seemed to Maggie that it would be very pleasant work, but when the next evening she really set herself at it, she found it very tiresome. There were a great many beds, and a great deal of water was needed. However, she did not give up her plan for that. Every evening found her at the place, and after awhile she found that the task seemed easier.

The very first night she had heard a great miaouling, and had seen a poor little cat running about the porch; evidently it was hungry. She had nothing to give it, however, but the next evening she asked the matron for some crusts, which she soaked in water and put into a little tin can. Puss was glad to get it, and every night Maggie took something for the cat to eat.

This went on for a month, until one morning a lady walked up to the poorhouse door and asked if there was a little girl there named Maggie. Maggie was sent for. The lady was Miss Billings. Miss Billings gave her a kind smile, and said:

"My dear child, Mr. Brown, my milkman, tells me that all the while I have been gone you have watered my flowers. Is that so?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Maggie. "I heard you say they would die for want of it, and that seemed a shame; so I did it evenings."

"And my cat!" said Miss Billings. "Some one has fed my cat. I carried her to a friend, but she ran away home again, as cats will, and she'd have starved but for you. I am so much obliged to you, and I want to give you something for it."

"Oh, I don't want anything, ma'am," Maggie said.

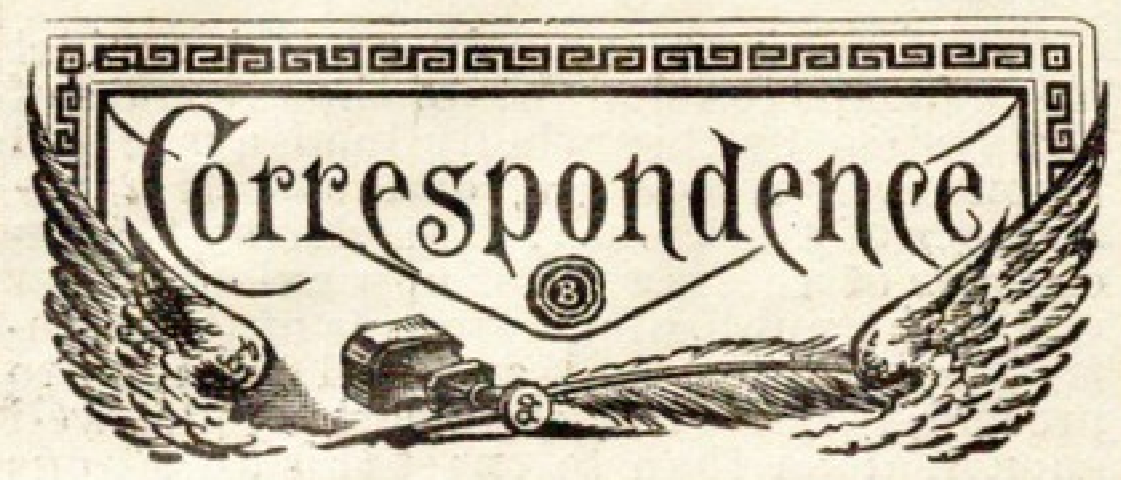
But Miss Billings made her go with her to the store, and gave her a nice pink frock, a nice straw hat, and other useful and pretty things.

A few days later, she came back and had a talk with the matron. She said she needed a little girl to help about the house, and would take Maggie if she liked to come.

"I have had some money left to me, and can afford to do well by her," she said.

Maggie has been well educated, and is as healthy and happy as a girl can be, and not a week passes but she comes to the poorhouse with some nice things that Miss Billings has sent to the old ladies. In fact, they have made it so much the fashion to be kind to the poorhouse folk that the authorities have resolved to put up a porch for them to sit under in sunny weather, and to lay out grass-plots before the house, and a contribution has been taken up in the village for rocking-chairs, and the poor old souls never had so much comfort before.

"And our Maggie started it all with the blackberry picking," the old ladies say to each other; which is quite true, for if Maggie had just gone about selfishly picking as many berries as she could eat, and forgetting that the poor old ladies might like some, too, the good grocer would not have thought about them and sent the sugar and dried fruit. If the grocer had not been generous, the dry-goods people might not have remembered what they could give away, and so on. She certainly set the ball rolling. As for Maggie's own self, if she had not been good-natured enough to water the flowers and feed the poor little cat, Miss Billings would never have known that there was a little girl at the poorhouse to whom she could be a friend. When one person does a good deed it generally puts it into another person's heart to do another. And even a kind thought has brought about great benefits to mankind, if some one uttered it who could do nothing else.



Correspondence

Several Inquiries.—J. B. asks the following questions: 1. What kind of silk goods have the most brilliant luster? 2. What is the finest white pure linen goods manufactured? 3. Is it possible to get ostrich feathers that will keep in curl? *Answer:* 1. Satin has probably the highest luster of any silken goods manufactured. There are, however, other silks that are almost as lustrous as this. 2. The finest pure linen goods manufactured is probably the sheer linen lawn which is made for the finest grade of handkerchiefs. This is of the most exquisite quality, and some of the finest grades are almost as shiny as silk. 3. There is a great deal of complaint of late that ostrich feathers will not keep in curl, and very few people seem to know the reason why this is so. The feathers now in market do not compare in quality with those on sale fifteen or twenty years ago. They are extremely beautiful when new, but become soft and stringy, and the flues get matted together, and it is almost impossible to restore them to their original fluffiness. This is accounted for by the fact that in old times the best feathers were taken from wild birds. An authority on these goods has said that there are probably not a hundred really high-class wild feathers in the market at any price. All of the ostrich plumes now in stock are plucked from tame birds. The plumage is not nearly so strong, lustrous nor so durable when the birds are bred in captivity. As a direct answer to this question, it may be said that probably there are no feathers in market that can be depended on to stay in curl.

The Liberty Cap.—Little Patriot asks how the use of the liberty cap originated. *Answer:* The following account is given by an authority on traditions and legends: "The Goddess of Liberty, in Mt. Aventine, was represented as holding in her hand a cap, the symbol of liberty. In France, the Jacobins wore a red cap. In England, a blue cap with a white border is the symbol of liberty; and Britannia is sometimes represented as holding a cap on the point of a spear. These symbols were all taken from the Romans. When a slave was manumitted by them, a small red cloth cap called pileus was placed upon his head, and, as soon as done, he was termed *Libertinus* (a freedman), and his name was registered in the city tribes. When Saturnius, in the year 263, took possession of the Capital, he hoisted a cap on the top of his spear to indicate that all slaves who joined his forces and marched under his standard should be free. When Marius incited the slaves to take up arms against Sylla he employed the same symbol; and when Cæsar was assassinated, the conspirators marched forth in a body, with a cap elevated on a spear in token of liberty."

Growing Mushrooms.—E. J. S. is anxious to know something about growing mushrooms. He has understood that they can be grown in cellars and would like some particulars. *Answer:* Mushrooms may be grown in any dark place where it is not too cold. There are special processes and preparations necessary in order to be successful. These are fully described in monographs written for this purpose. Your address will be given to a reliable dealer who will furnish you more information than the *Ledger* has space for. In addition to this, you may find it of advantage to write to the Agricultural Department at Washington for any bulletins they may have issued on the subject. Mushrooms can be grown in the cellar of a house or barn. Some of the best growers make beds under their barns expressly for this purpose, and find the business profitable.

Going West to Start Business.—A Subscriber writes as follows: "A party of four young men, at present employed in the East, wish to go to Port Angeles, Washington, to start business. They would like to know something about the country." *Answer:* As far as the special features of that immediate locality are concerned, the *Ledger* can give but little information. In general terms, however, it may be said that Washington offers extremely good inducements to energetic and active young men. It is not unlikely that the *Ledger* containing this request may fall into the hands of some one who is perfectly familiar with that region, and who would be very glad to tell Subscriber something about it.

Aids to Drawing.—W. G. H. has read in the *Ledger* of something that is of great assistance in drawing. *Answer:* He probably refers to the Artograph, by means of which any picture can be enlarged almost indefinitely, or any landscape may be projected on a canvas, and sketched or painted at will. As an instructor in drawing, it is invaluable, as by its aid the utmost accuracy can be secured, and the perspective is all right. The effect is precisely like viewing a landscape or object through a mirror.

A Seafaring Life.—Sailor Boy asks how to go about learning to be a sailor. *Answer:* The best and surest way is to enlist in the navy. You are put into a rudimentary class and go through all grades. The training is very thorough, and when you have finished, there is very little about a ship that you are not familiar with. If you are so situated that you can do this, you might get on to the training ships. By writing to the Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C., you will get the newest information on this subject.

Cake Recipes.—An Old Reader asks a recipe for devil cake or devil's food. *Answer:* The *Ledger* has never heard of such a dish. It is barely possible that the name may have been given to black fruit-cake in contradistinction to angel cake, which is white and delicate. Perhaps some of the *Ledger* readers may be able to answer this query.

Growing Tall.—F. B. wants particulars about growing tall by attaching weights to the feet at night. *Answer:* A description of the way in which one young man managed this process will shortly appear in the *Ledger*.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

Science

Exercise as Affecting the Growth of the Individual. An eminent authority declares that judicious exercise has great influence on the growth of a human being. The stature is increased by hanging by the arms, and some experiments have been made with a view to ascertain whether hanging by the head has any effect on the length of the spinal column. It is claimed that a bed constructed on an angle of forty-five degrees may be a useful accessory to growth. The body rests on the bed and is kept in place by a harness that passes under the arms and around the shoulders. The head is very slightly drawn upward by a set of straps, these latter being so arranged that only a very slight pull comes on the spinal cord above the shoulders. The support is little more than the weight of the head itself, the idea being to remove all downward pressure from the spinal column. One student of this process has in addition attached light weights to his feet. He watches his conditions very carefully, and ceases his experiments if there is even the slightest sensation of discomfort or irritation along the spinal column. Just what effect this will have on the growth, it is as yet too early to determine, but it is believed that removing all weight from the spine and keeping the body fully extended during the hours of sleep, will, if managed with prudence, increase the stature to a considerable degree.

Waterproof Building Materials. Experiments have been made in waterproofing brick and sandstone. The oils used were raw linseed, boiled linseed, and mineral oil. Sandstone took up much less oil than brick, according to the relative size of the two. The mineral oil was taken up in very large quantities by both sandstone and brick, while relatively small amounts of both the raw and boiled linseed were absorbed. Then the treated materials were put away for the test of time. In four years they were examined. The mineral oil was almost entirely gone, while the linseed oils remained. The bricks treated with the latter were almost impervious to moisture. The sandstone blocks that had absorbed the linseed had lost the added weight of the oil, but apparently retained the beneficial effects of it, being practically waterproof. The value of this experiment consists in being able to use building materials for walls to be laid in damp places, where certain chemical elements in the water might disintegrate the wall materials. It is further suggested that cement be mixed with a certain amount of oil, in order to make the joints as waterproof as the blocks of which the wall is laid.

A New Blackboard. So much has been said of late about the blackboard and the slate as inconvenient and unsanitary, that a novelty blackboard is worth mentioning. This is made on the following principle: A sheet of ground glass, of suitable size, is set into a very firm, thin frame. This frame is hinged so as to swing into another frame attached to the wall. This stationary portion is fitted with a back board, covered with black canton flannel, velveteen or serge, velveteen giving the best effect. When the swinging glass is pushed firmly into the frame it presses on the velveteen backing. The ground surface is, of course, outside. This makes a blackboard that may be used either for crayons or lead pencil, as the case may be. There is also a white back, which may be used. This forms an admirable surface for colored crayons. If it is necessary to copy or practice in geometrical designs or flowers, sheets of paper containing them are placed between the backing and the glass, the outlines showing through perfectly. This board has many advantages, and will probably be adopted in many of the schools and academies.

Destroying the Gypsy-Moth. The Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture is urging the passage of an appropriation of two hundred thousand dollars to be used in exterminating the gypsy-moth. The director says that four hundred and fifty to five hundred men will be needed during the spring and summer. They are provided with machines which spray burning oil. This is thrown out so rapidly and with such force that the eggs and caterpillars are destroyed without injury to the trees. All foliage is carefully looked after, and tree trunks are examined, that the eggs laid may be destroyed as far as possible. One feature of the work is quite new, and provides that particular attention be paid to keeping the trees along the roads free of these insects, as it is said that caterpillars dropping upon passing teams and carriages may be taken many miles, and thus given a foothold in localities where otherwise they might not appear.

To See the Eclipse. Among the expeditions that are planned for the future is a trip to Lapland to observe the total eclipse of the sun, which is to occur on the 9th of August, 1896. A steamship is to be chartered, and a large party is expected to take in this interesting event. Viewing an eclipse in that climate may have its allurements, and aside from its scientific features, the tour will offer great inducements, especially to those who have never journeyed outside of the ordinary itineraries of pleasure-seekers.

Improvement in Lighting. A new invention, by means of which the illuminating power of gas is increased about fifteen times, is attracting attention in scientific journals. The method is a combination of electricity and gas, the electricity being a very weak current and used to work a tiny motor enclosed in a gas lamp. It is said that air is forced into the flame, giving it the most astonishing brilliancy. Lamps of 800-candle power are made in this way.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

All questions which may be asked on the subjects treated in this Department will be answered in the Correspondence column.

Fashion and Fancy. CAPRICES OF FASHION.—"The temper and disposition of womankind have changed greatly within the last half century," said a wealthy woman, who has for many years kept pace with the fancies and frivolities of fashionable life. "In my young days, if a style came out with a Paris indorsement, there was no such thing as getting around it. Accept it we must, whether or no. Indeed, it never occurred to us to do anything else. But nowadays we know better, or at least we do better. All along the line we have worn all sorts of uncomfortable and absurd things simply because they were fashionable. We have absolutely refused to tolerate the long shoulder-seams on our dresses, and the result is that our will is recognized, and we are getting decently comfortable things again. Designers have learned that while we may accept various and sundry vagaries, they must be within limits, for we will not put up with anything that makes us so desperately constrained as some of these extremes. Capes and collars, ruffles, epaulets and straps produce the effect of long shoulder-seams, but underneath them all we have the use of our arms, and can put on our bonnets and adjust our hairpins after we have fastened our dresses, even though we may rumple and wrinkle our neck and shoulder rigging while we are doing it.

"At last, after many years, much preaching, much suffering, and a great deal of useless effort on the part of hygienic reformers and others who have had the good of the race at heart, fashion and custom have stepped in and reconstructed our ideas and waists in accordance with ample breathing space. When the woman was told that she would have better health, more comfort, better looks and every way improved conditions here and hereafter if she would refrain from tight lacing, she smiled with the utmost demureness, and immediately set about pulling the strings just a little tighter. Warnings were proclaimed in the public prints, shouted from the pulpit, insisted on by medical men, and urged by all the sensible people in the land.

"It was a most exasperating fact that all of this talk and argument produced no effect whatever, simply because the long-waisted fashion plate was considered stylish and attractive, and the woman formed her style on these models. But when the bicycle came and Julia and Margaret discovered that Frances and Adelaide could wheel up hill better than they themselves and with more ease, because they had discarded corsets and wore hygienic waists without the least shadow of constriction of the ribs, Julia and Margaret rushed forthwith for scissors and penknives and away went the corset laces, and freedom and breathing space were courted with great enthusiasm.

"It is a fact demonstrated beyond question that tight clothes and bicycling are sadly at odds. To be a successful wheelwoman, it is absolutely imperative that one must have plenty of room for chest and lung expansion, and as wheeling is the fad, the waist measure is growing apace.

"There is a tendency among women who are fond of this amusement to draw the line rather closely in regard to costuming. Except for special occasions, the tailor costume of the past few years has no charms for them. The hours during which they formerly wore this style of dress are devoted to the bicycle, and costumes suitable for this pleasure have taken the place of the tailor-made dresses.

"Two or three ladies have provided themselves with bicycle suits and dressy indoor costumes, with one or two handsome street dresses, and the tailor outfit is left out of the count entirely, the bicycle suit having taken its place.

"There is considerable complaint that the perfected costume for the wheel has not yet made its appearance. Of course, there are fads and fancies, and monstrosities as well, but sensible, conservative women have adopted the medium-length skirt, with blazer and shirt-waist or vest, and have no fault to find. The main thing is to have good material and a conservative style."

Some of the new skirts are lined with heavy, soft material, which keeps them in place. Light and thin skirts fly and fill with air, and are not suited to the wheel. The heavier grades of Priestley Cravenette, with lining of moderately heavy fabric, are the most satisfactory. One suit of this material is lined with denim which has been washed and thoroughly shrunken. Skirt and blazer are so lined, and for spring wear and cold days the arrangement is admirable. The goods does not crush or wrinkle, and in warm weather the blazer may be folded in the carrier or strapped on the handle-bars.

A BARGAIN COLLECTION OF
FLOWER SEEDS
10 Choice Annuals, (everybody's favorites), all new, fresh seeds, sure to grow and bloom this season. Pansy, 40 colors and markings; Phlox, 20 colors; Verbena, 18 colors; Pinks 10 colors; Petunia, 10 colors; Asters, 12 colors; Balsam, 8 colors; Sweet Peas, 12 colors; Mignonette and Sweet Alyssum.
FOR 12 CENTS and the name and address of two of your friends who grow flowers, I will send, postpaid, the complete collection, one pkt. each of the ten varieties (enough for any ordinary garden.) This is a BONAFIDE offer, made to introduce my home grown flower seeds to new customers and which I guarantee to please you or the amount paid refunded and the seeds given as a present.
Miss C. H. LIPPINCOTT,
319 and 323 Sixth St. So., MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

(Continued.)

Fashion Notes. A handsome toilet for a day reception is made of heliotrope satin and orange velvet. The skirt is very full, and has a moderate-length train. The entire lower edge of the skirt is covered with rich embroidery. The front breadth is embroidered about two-thirds its length, and on either side of this are clusters of side plaits in orange velvet. These plaits are about ten inches wide at the hem, narrowing to an inch at the belt; then continuing to the shoulder-seams, where they are about three inches wide. The entire lower portion of the bodice is embroidered; the collar is of velvet and the leg-o'-mutton sleeves are finished with lace ruffles. A dressy bonnet of orange velvet and fine jet completes the effect.

A very elegant street wrap is made of prune-colored satin. It is in princesse shape and has sleeves with large puffs above the elbows and close-fitting from elbows to wrists. The cape, which is pointed front and back, is elaborately embroidered in jet and heavy silk. The high collar rolls outward, and the collar and fronts as well as the cuffs are edged with sable. One marked feature of this wrap are the box-plaits of the material that extend from the shoulders to the hem of the garment over all the trimming. These plaits are about two inches wide where they meet at shoulder-seams and broaden to ten inches wide at the hem.

A dress of wood-colored wool crepon is made up with a nine-gored skirt. Between the gores the material is opened and A-shaped sections of garnet velvet are set in, these sections being edged with galloon. The fitted waist has leg-o'-mutton sleeves and over it is worn a cape of garnet velvet, the cape having a high collar, being merely yoke length in front and back and with points that run out over the sleeves and extend to the elbows, where they are fastened with buttons and loops. The cape is lined with garnet satin and the costume is extremely attractive.

For information thanks are due Messrs. H. O'Neill & Co., James McCreery & Co. and B. Altman & Co.

Cod-Liver Oil. Probably the great value of cod-liver oil lies in its easy digestibility, or, rather, that it can be readily emulsified. It aids digestion, reëstablishes the balance of nutrition and enables the invalid to turn other articles of diet to a good account. It increases weight, and enables the invalid to resist cold. It is especially indicated in cases of consumption and scrofula. Swollen glands often give way to its influence. Chronic rheumatism and gout are sometimes only to be cured by this agent. It is strongly recommended for rheumatism—it is better than medicine. It is found useful in rickets, wasting diseases of children, in some skin diseases, and as a blood tonic for the delicate.

It is a constant difficulty to get patients to take cod-liver oil, because it makes them sick. It is worth while to try and overcome this objection, as, when once conquered, the patient gets to positively like his oil. We remember one individual who disguised the taste of castor-oil by taking it in cod-liver oil. Begin with a small dose—half or one teaspoonful of the pale oil—and take either in the middle of a meal or just after. It will thus be digested with food, and not cause eructations. It may be given in several ways, We know no better than that of mixing it with an equal part of good ketchup. Some float it in ginger, wine, claret, orange juice, or even stout. Occasionally, it is best tolerated when given after the patient has retired to bed. It is advisable in any case to begin with a small dose, and never go beyond a tablespoonful three times a day. We have known a working man spend half his wages on this article, having the idea that the more he took the better. When it is found to disagree after a fair trial, it may be combined with pure ether—ten drops of ether to one teaspoonful of oil. This seldom fails, but the use of the ether should be discontinued after a week or two.

Pocket Cash-Register. Among the novelties for the benefit of women, as it is announced, there is what is called a pocket cash-register. It is about the size of a watch and looks very much like it, but instead of this useful article, it is a device by means of which the woman who shops may know how much money she has used.

This would be a very nice idea, provided it had an attachment by which the woman could tell what she did with her money. It is easy enough to count one's change to see what is left. The perplexing point is to know what has become of it. To know that the money is gone and there is nothing to show for it, is extremely aggravating, and a great many persons would be quite as well satisfied to be semi-oblivious to the amount of cash they had when they started out, rather than have the disagreeable consciousness of forgetting what they had done with it or thinking it might be lost, or be unable to account for it in any way.

Cocoanut Pie. Beat thoroughly together the yolks of three eggs, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, and one of flour. Add two teacupfuls of milk and half a cupful of freshly-grated cocoanut. Pour into a baking-dish lined with rich pie paste. Bake in a moderate oven. Beat the whites of the eggs to a stiff froth, add three tablespoonfuls of sugar, and half a teacupful of cocoanut. When the pie is done, spread this over it. Return to the oven until it is a delicate brown. Serve cold.

Orange Jelly. Dissolve half a box of gelatine in half a cupful of cold water. Cut six oranges in halves, remove the pulp carefully and lay the skins in cold water. Add to the pulp the juice of two lemons, one cupful of sugar and one cupful of boiling water. Add gelatine; stir all together and strain. Dry the insides of the skins, notch the edges, fill with jelly and set in a cold place. When stiff, serve with white cake or kisses.

Patterns.

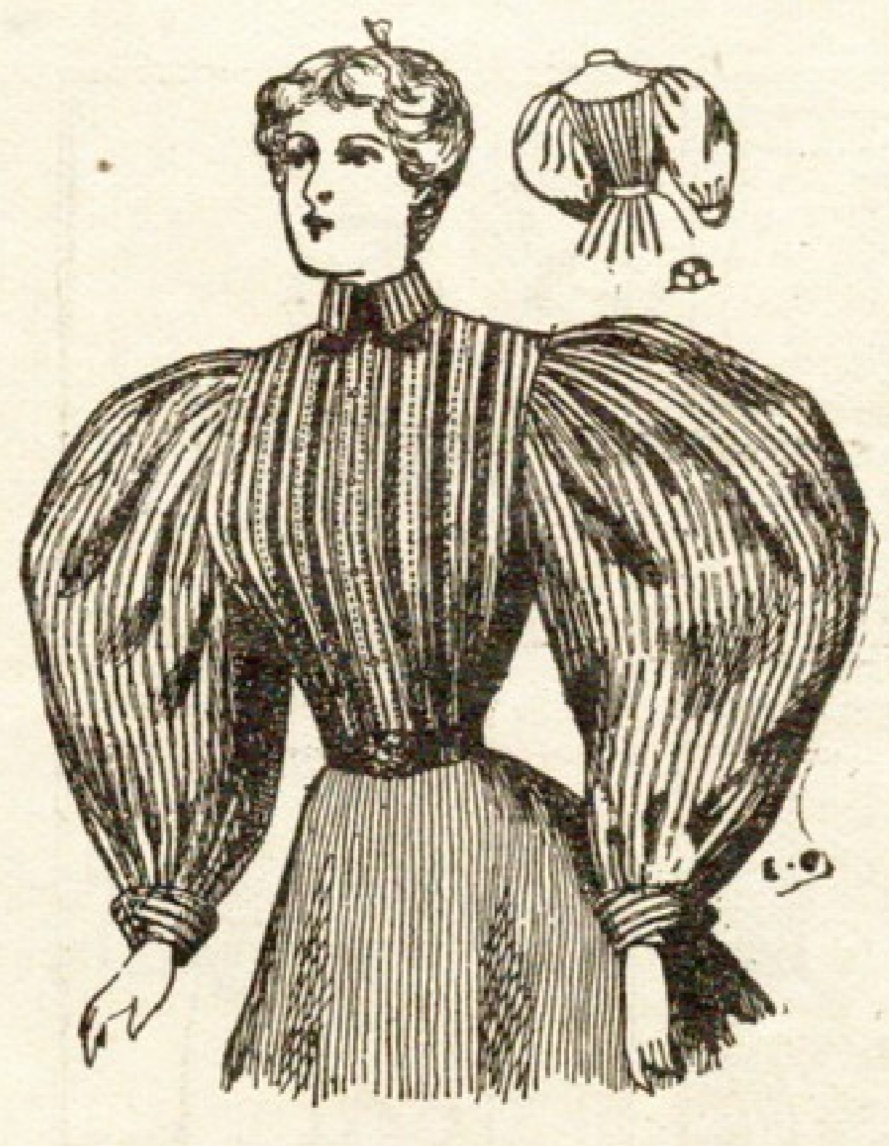
We have made special arrangements by which we can supply our readers with dress-patterns by mail, prepaid, at the nominal price of ten cents per pattern.

Each issue of the *Ledger*, hereafter, will contain illustrations of two or more new styles, for which patterns will be supplied to order. Parties ordering will please use a small sheet of plain writing-paper, small enough to go into an ordinary envelope, write name very plainly and give post-office and State, together with street and number, wherever necessary. Be careful to give correct bust-measure and the number of the pattern desired, using the number under the illustration. Inclose ten cents in stamps for each pattern ordered. State that you are a reader of the *Ledger*, otherwise these patterns will cost you 25, 30 or 35 cents each, as the case may be, these being the regular prices for which the patterns are sold.

The patterns selected for illustration in this issue are numbered 6689, 6688 and 6686.

Ladies' Plaited Shirt-Waist.

Fancy striped percale made this stylish shirt-waist, which is one of the newest modes. Three backward-turning side plaits or tucks are stitched on each front, a box-plait being formed on the right front edge, through which button holes are worked to close with studs or buttons. The back is plaited in the same way, and joined to a round yoke that is made double, and the lower edge is worn under the skirt. Two collars are provided by the pattern, a turn-down collar, the front edges of which bend slightly back. Either collar can be permanently joined to the neck, or finished separately to button on, the neck being completed with a fitted band. The full gigot shirt-sleeves are gathered top and bottom, openings at the back being finished with under and over laps, and the round, flaring cuffs, shaped in two sections, are closed with studs or buttons. Wash silk, swivel, gingham, lawn, batiste, dimity and other cotton and linen fabrics are used for shirt-waists by the mode. White collars and cuffs give the charm of variety to the waist, and are very fashionable.



6689—LADIES' PLAITED SHIRT WAIST

Pattern **6689** is cut in six sizes: 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure.

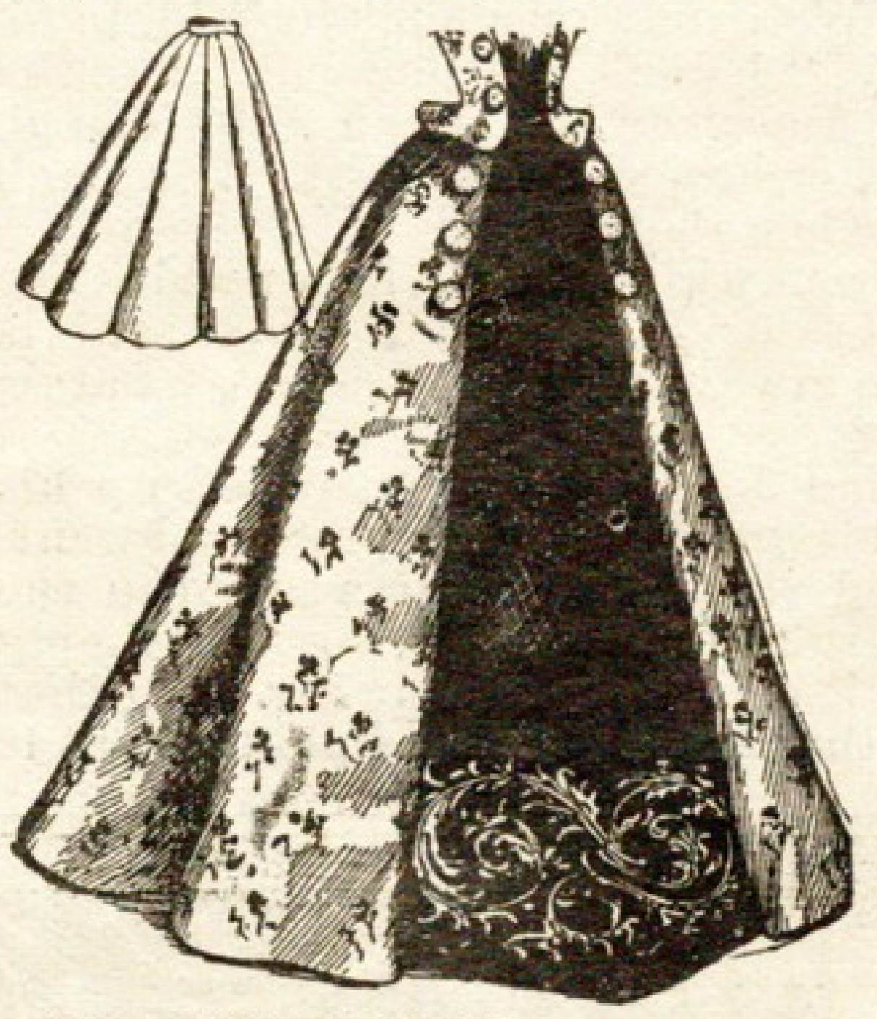
Quantity of Material 36 Inches Wide.

For 32 inches bust measure	4¼ yd.
" 36 " " "	4½ "
" 40 " " "	4¾ "
" 42 " " "	5 "

Retail price of pattern **6689** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Ladies' Seven-Gored Skirt.

The revival of the First Empire mode has created a demand for this style of skirt, which was a favorite with the beautiful but ill-fated Queen, and is always handsome, graceful and becoming to full or slender figures, and particularly desirable for stout ladies. Silver-gray and green brocaded satin is here combined with dark-green velvet, decorated with silver passementerie or embroidery, three large, fancy buttons being placed on each side, overlapping the side gores nearer the top. The skirt is shaped in seven gores, two in back, two on each side, and the front gore, which is usually, but not necessarily, made of some contrasting material. The top fits smoothly, the sides overlapping the front gore with panel effect and falling in ripples below the hips. The back gores are laid in box plaits at the top, the placket being finished at the center seam and the top completed with a belt. A strap underneath holds all the flutes, ripples, etc., in proper position. The skirt is adapted to basques, jackets, coats and waists in Louis XV. and XVI. styles, the vest, revers and cuffs of which usually match the front gore of skirt. In remodeling skirts this pattern will be found invaluable, as the soiled front width can be discarded, or a too narrow skirt widened by the introduction of a contrasting front gore, an endless variety of combinations being possible by the mode.



6688—LADIES' SEVEN GORED SKIRT

Pattern **6688** is cut in five sizes, 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 inches waist measure.

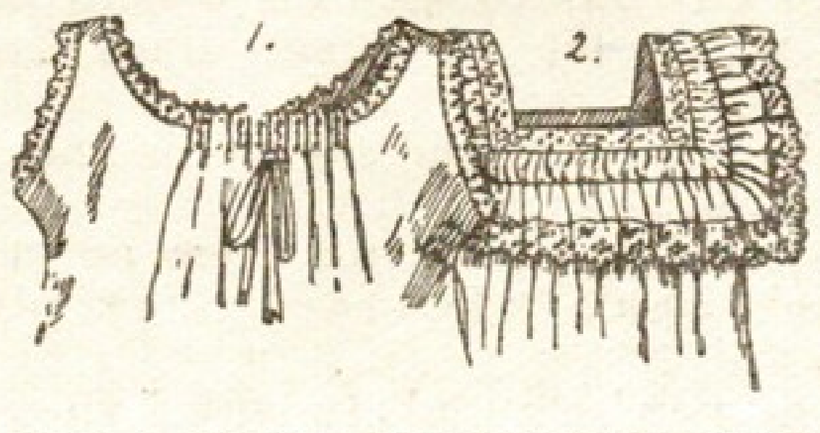
Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

For 22 inches waist measure	4¾ yds.
" 26 " " "	5 "
" 30 " " "	5¼ "

Retail price of skirt pattern **6688** is 30 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Ladies' and Misses' Chemise.

Two fashionable styles of the revised chemise are given in this pattern. No. 1 is made of fine white cambric, trimmed around the neck and sleeves with narrow embroidered edging. The body, of ample width and regulation length, is shaped with the sleeves by under-arm seams that join the front and back together. The neck is cut in low, rounded outline, with fullness gathered in a double row of shirring at the back, and underfaced with a stay, ribbon being run through beading and drawn to adjust the fullness in front. No. 2 is developed in French nainsook, and trimmed with Valenciennes lace and insertion. The fullness in front and back is gathered and joined to a hollow, square-shaped yoke, that is covered with a puff of nainsook that falls loosely in a frill all around, and is edged with lace, a band of insertion being laid over the top gathers of the puff. Fine white muslin, percale, lawn and wash-silk are usually chosen in white, and decorated with lace embroidery and ribbon.



6686—LADIES' AND MISSES' CHEMISE

Pattern **6686** is cut in seven sizes, viz.: 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inch bust measure; also for Misses 12, 14 and 16 years old.

Quantity of Material 36 Inches Wide.

	No. 1	No. 2
For 36-inch bust measure,	2½ yds.	3 yds.
For Miss of 14 years,	2 "	2½ "

Retail price of pattern **6686** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

The Nutmeg. Very many of the articles in common use in the household are imperfectly understood as to nature, habits and growth; but almost every one of them has its peculiar history and its extremely interesting story.

The nutmeg has been the occasion of a good deal of ill-feeling among the smaller tribes of the southern countries of the world. For many years the Dutch traders monopolized the nutmeg business, and so jealous were they of other countries where this valuable article of commerce was obtained that they, at one time, destroyed an enormous number of trees out of pure revenge. When the crop was unusually good, and there was danger of a lowering in price, the Dutch traders would burn the nutmegs rather than bring them to market. It is said that one time the Dutch burned up three piles of nutmegs any one of which was as large as a good-sized church. What an exceedingly aromatic atmosphere must have prevailed in that locality!

The nutmeg grows in the Spice Islands, in the Malay Archipelago. The tree is shaped something like a pear tree and is twenty or thirty feet high. It has a smooth, gray bark and beautiful, dark-green leaves, which are silvery-white underneath. The blossoms are pale yellow and very fragrant, and grow in clusters. Nutmegs are the seeds of a fruit somewhat resembling a peach in size and shape. This fruit ripens and bursts, then the seed or nutmeg falls out. The nutmeg, in one way, resembles the orange trees in the South, as many of them have flowers and fruit on at the same time and ripen nutmegs all the year round.

There are numbers of trees that bear a thousand nutmegs a year. When the fruit is young it is palatable, and is sometimes preserved with brandy and sugar. The seed or nutmeg proper is surrounded by a series of folds that form a husk or shell close about it. As it ripens this becomes solid, and loses the brilliant red color it has when first formed. This husk, after the fruit ripens and becomes dry, grows of a brownish color, and is shiny and brittle. This is what is known as mace. When the nutmeg first comes out of the shell it is a very light brown, and is as smooth as though turned in a lathe. In drying it becomes wrinkled and grayish.

Great care is taken in gathering the fruit, which is done with a long stick with a hook on the end of it. The pulp is removed, the mace is very carefully taken off and dried. Sun heat under protection is thought most desirable, but in very wet seasons it is dried by the fire. After all the moisture has evaporated it is sprinkled with salt and then packed for market. During the process of preparation the nutmegs are put into grates over a fire, the temperature is kept at about 140° Fahrenheit, until the kernel rattles in the shell. This operation frequently consumes two months. Then the shells are very brittle and are easily crushed and the nutmegs are taken out.

It was for a long time the policy of the traders so to cure these nuts that they lost their power of germination, and for some time the Banda Islands had a monopoly of this spice. But nature does things better than this, and not being in favor of monopoly, the pigeons carried these nuts to other islands, where they dropped them. They took root there, the trees flourished and added greatly to the production of this delicious condiment. Nutmeg-trees come into bearing after seven or eight years of growth, then continue uninterrupted for something like ninety to a hundred years. Therefore a nutmeg plantation is a most valuable possession.

Cocoanut Drops. Grate a cocoanut and weigh it; then add half the weight of powdered sugar and the white of one egg, beaten to a stiff froth. Stir all together, then drop the mixture, with a dessertspoon, upon buttered white paper or tin sheets, and sift sugar over them. Bake in a slow oven fifteen minutes.

The Trained Nurse. There are few positions open to women where the compensation is more liberal than in that of the trained nurse, but it is only among well-to-do people where the twenty to twenty-five dollars per week salary can be given for such a purpose. Under ordinary circumstances, the invalid must get along in the best possible way, and unquestionably has a good deal to put up with from awkward hands and blundering heads.

A great deal is said about teaching children to be useful, and very much has been accomplished in this direction, but as far as heard from there has never yet been a juvenile training school for nurses, at least not outside of the home circle and the personal overlooking of the head of the house.

One woman who looks a long ways ahead and who generally finds that it is much easier to work with brains than with hands, has for years kept up a little training school for nurses among her own children, with dollies for patients. This novel business came about in this way: Betsey, an imported doll of extraordinary beauty and high cash value, had been presented to one of the little daughters of the house, and was, as might naturally be supposed, a great favorite. There was also Amanda, a lovely wax doll who had been the property of the little girl's mother when she herself was in the nursery. Betsey had a bad fall and dislocated her ankle, besides receiving other serious injuries. There was a great deal of weeping and a general family conclave on the situation. It struck this sensible mother that here was a good chance for an object-lesson, so she taught the little ones the main points of nursing, and gave them many useful ideas that were of great service to them later in life.

It is all very well to say that nursing is an art, and that people have a genius for it, and all that sort of thing; but it is almost always the case that intelligent thoughtfulness avails to make the patient approximately comfortable, or at least as much so as the nature of the disease permits.

It is of the utmost importance to have everything orderly, clean, and as dainty as possible. Another necessity of good nursing is quiet, but not that suggestive and painful silence that causes the sufferer to wonder what it all means. One extremely sensitive patient was frightened nearly out of her wits because everybody was so quiet. She wakened out of a little doze, and being scarcely able to open her eyes and too weak to move, she saw at a distance some members of the family with exceedingly sad countenances, traces of tears and agitation and observed their lips as though in conversation even, though she could hear no sound. Her first impression was that she must be dead and that these relatives had been crying over her. The shock threw her into a state of excitement which was removed only after long and careful treatment.

Conversation should never be carried on in whispers in a sick room. It is much better that every word be distinctly audible. Absolute naturalness and apparent unconsciousness is the safest atmosphere with which to surround a sick person. Too much painstaking may impress the sick one with the idea that there is something more serious than really exists, and fussiness is the most annoying thing in the world. Keep company and callers away from very ill people. Outsiders, unless they are the most intimate of friends, have no business in a sick room, and even then if they are of the noisy, bustling, rollicking sort they are better stopped at the threshold. Very dear friends, those who are one's companions in health, may be admitted for a minute if they have sense enough and tact enough not to agitate the patient, and will come in naturally, gently touch the hand, perhaps place a few flowers on the pillow or in a vase where they can be seen without an effort, or offer any of the little courtesies of extreme friendliness. Such a visitor may be of very great benefit, but as a rule, too much visiting goes sadly against the recovery of a very sick person.

Carrot Salad. Select medium-sized carrots; wash, scrape and slice, then boil until tender in salted water. Drain from the water, and while warm pour over a quart of carrots the following dressing: Three tablespoonfuls of salad oil or melted butter, half a teaspoonful of pepper, a little salt and eight tablespoonfuls of vinegar. Mix lightly, but thoroughly, through the carrots, and serve at once.

What is the use of Patent Leather?
SOLD EVERYWHERE
When I can polish my shoes with
Brown's French Dressing
Ask your dealer for...
Brown's French Dressing
And be sure to accept no other.
Superior to all others for the following reasons:
1. It gives a superior Polish,
2. It does not crock or rub off on the skirts.
3. Unlike all others, it does not crack or hurt the leather, but on the contrary acts as a preservative.
4. Has been manufactured over forty years and always stood at the head.

COUNTING THE COST.*

BY MARGARET DELAND.

CHAPTER I.

Annie Graham, the young woman with whom this story concerns itself, lived in a Western manufacturing town; her home was, both inside and outside, like hundreds and thousands of other American homes—a cheap frame house, in a cheap, respectable suburb. A house without any other beauty or refinement than cleanliness, and a certain amount of rather coarse comfort. Her father was a workingman, as his father had been before him. He was a gas-fitter, and went to his work every morning with a greasy leather bundle under his arm, and a cheerful heart in his breast. First, because he had plenty of work and, having no imagination, never worried about the future; but mostly because of a comfortable fact to which, when not occupied with the practical details of his trade, he devoted his thoughts; the fact being that there was a certain tidy bit of money in the bank for his Annie—money which he had hoarded up, little by little, saved out of car-fares, and tobacco, and clothes; money which meant privation and courage, and independence, and slow, persistent, heavy toil. It amounted to a little over fifteen hundred dollars, and he hoped it would be twenty-five hundred before he died. What Annie would do with it when he was gone was the only direction in which Johnny Graham's fancy worked. Would she rent a better house, maybe, than this little one they had lived in since she was twelve, or would she get herself fine clothes or a piano or books? He thought that she would probably get books. Annie was so fond of reading! He was very proud of this fondness for reading, and used to tell his fellow-workmen about it, and say he had seen her turn over so many pages in fifteen minutes by his watch. He timed her, he said, and my! but she was a fast reader! He had no idea of placing any restrictions upon the way in which she should spend her inheritance when she got it; he had no feeling about the money as anything but a means of pleasure to Annie.

"When I'm dead and gone, the afternoon, maybe, of the funeral, they'll tell her: 'Annie Graham,' the lawyer'll say, 'your father's left you a tidy bit of money. It's twenty-five hundred dollars,' he'll say; well, maybe it'll be twenty-six hundred—well, say three thousand. 'Miss Graham,' he'll say, 'here's three thousand dollars.' Well, Annie'll jump. An' it'll comfort her," Annie's father would think many times a day, smiling and screwing in his gas fixtures with his blackened fingers, or scratching a match on his trousers, and hunting for leaks.

He was a little man, with gentle blue eyes and pale, thin brown hair, combed back from his forehead; he was not particularly intelligent, he was only kind. But he was an American through and through; and, knowing nothing about the government of his native land, treasured his vote and believed in his value as a man.

He had been father and mother to his little girl ever since his wife died, when Annie was five. He had baked and scrubbed and cleaned for them both when she was a child, and in his clumsy way he had sewed on buttons and darned rents and washed her little face and hands, as tenderly as a woman could have done. And when she grew into a big girl and went to the grammar school, he still knew all about her hats and clothes; and he still tried to save her pretty hands, and sifted the ashes, and waited on her, and loved her and was proud of her, just as he always had been. There was more than one hard-working woman neighbor who would have been willing to "make a good stepmother" to Annie, and who felt, in all honesty, that the gas-fitter was spoiling his girl, and that she just only hoped nothing bad would come of it.

"Them girls that's taken such care of—well, the dear only knows what happens to them!" the neighbors said, with mysterious pursings of the lips and shakes of the head. But, so far, nothing had happened to Annie. Nothing "bad" had come of the simple, faithful loving that the child had had.

Annie was eighteen. She was a fresh-looking girl, with an intelligent face, though a little serious, perhaps, for her years. Her placid gray eyes had a rather absent look sometimes, and there was a line on her white forehead that told of thought. But Johnny Graham knew what that meant. He knew with what intensity Annie had applied herself to her studies when she was in school, and how, after she had graduated, and had gotten a place as a "saleslady," as Johnny expressed it, she still worked and toiled over her books whenever she could make time.

"But she's mostly figurin'," he told his friends, proudly.

That Annie, at eighteen, had taught herself geometry, and had yearnings for the higher calculus, was a matter of burning pride to the gas-fitter, though he had no idea what it was all about.

"I suppose, now, Annie, you know all there is on them subjects?" he said to her one night as he sat in his shirt-sleeves smoking his pipe by the kitchen stove, and looking over at his daughter, who was sitting with her pencil pressed against her lips, frowning at a sheet of calculations before her. Annie gave a little start and looked up smiling.

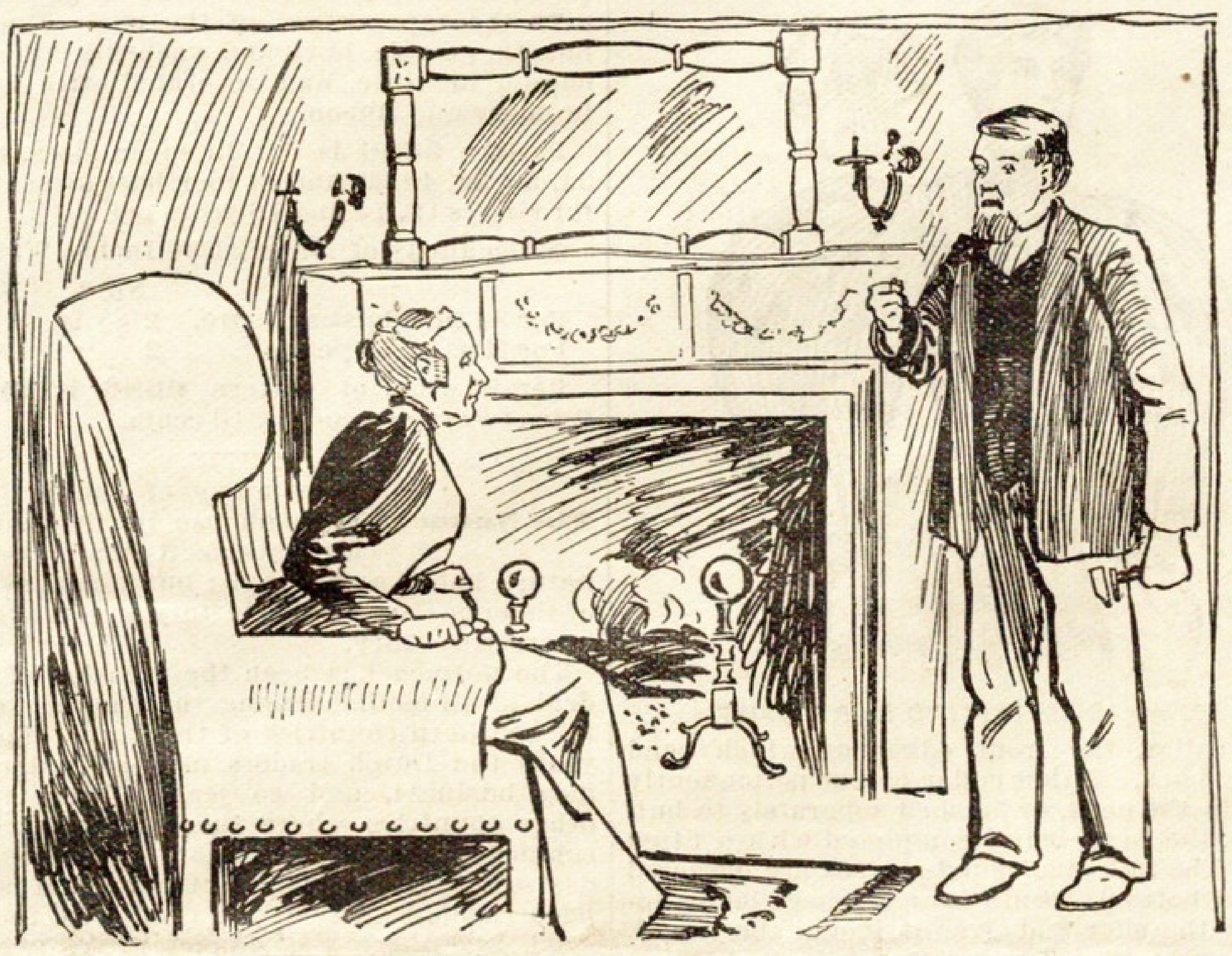
"Why, father, dear, I don't know anything—comparatively."

"But, Annie, now what's the good of them lines? Do you cut patterns on 'em? I seen a advertisement saying they'd show you how to cut out dresses on a chart. And there was a lot of them lines drawed on it."

Annie came over and sat on his knee; she laughed, but she sighed, too.

"No; it's just working them out that I like," she said. "I guess I like studying; that's it."

"Well, you're a real student, I guess," he told her, and passed his rough, grimy hand over her soft hair. It was certainly a very black hand, though it had been washed at the kitchen sink before supper. "Did I pull your hair?" he said, for it seemed as though she winced, but she only answered by taking his hand and kissing it, which made her father protest, and then cuddle her up in his arms and say: "Well, now, Annie, *I* think you're a real scholar."



HE SPOKE TO AN OLD LADY WHO SAT BY THE FIRE.

They sat in the kitchen, but not because they had not a parlor, like everybody else. There was a best room behind the kitchen, and upstairs two bedrooms, and above them an attic, rented to Dave Duggan, a steady young workman who had lodged with them nearly a year. Of course, obviously—propinquity being the root of love—he had a tenderness for Annie; and he was referred to by the women who were not Annie's stepmothers as her "feller." The parlor, in which the gas-fitter rarely sat, was as frankly ugly as the outside of the small, narrow, frame house. It had been furnished according to Mrs. Graham's taste, and it had been religiously unchanged since her death. The tapestry carpet, with its monstrous roses and broad green leaves, had worn and faded into inoffensiveness, and the red rep furniture had suffered the same kindly change; but the knitted tidies were new and the plush picture frames; and Annie had added knots of china silk on the chair-backs; and there was a snow-shovel, painted and gilded and tied with pink satin ribbons, on the wall, and some decorated brass plaques; and on the mantelpiece Dave Duggan's gift—two little wooden shoes, gilded and adorned with blue satin bows, and used as match-boxes.

To Johnny Graham this terrible room stood for art and luxury. As for Annie, she did not know enough to find the snow-shovel painful, nor even the rolling-pin, another gift from Dave, which, covered with plush, hung from one corner of the mantelpiece. She merely thought of these things as "mother's" and as "presents," and valued them accordingly. But she would never have dreamed of occupying this fine room unless there was company; and, indeed, the kitchen was far more homelike.

She sat now nestling down against her father's shoulder, listening to his story of the day's work: the fine house on the hill he had gone into to mend a fixture; the nice young lady he had seen; and the toilet table all covered with silver things.

"Why, Annie, now I tell you, there was brushes and combs made out of silver; and there was five little sort of boxes, different sizes and shapes, hearts and rounds mostly. Didn't seem to have nothing in 'em. I had to move 'em to get at the bracket. What do you suppose folks has such things for? Now a brush made out o' silver is no sense; it's heavy. Annie, now, would you like things like that?"

"Indeed, I wouldn't," she said. "Think of the trouble they'd be to keep clean."

"Well, now, the help does that in them houses, I suppose," he ruminated. "Annie, now, suppose you had a lot of money, would you buy them things?"

"Indeed, I wouldn't!" Annie said again, laughing. "No, I know what I'd do. I heard a girl talking about it. There's a college for girls somewhere in New England, just like there is for young men. I'd go to that college and study. My! wouldn't I study!"

*   *   *   *   *   *

That was the beginning of what some people called the tragedy of Annie Graham's life, and some the success—it all depends on how you look at it.

Her chance remark about a girls' college lingered in her father's thoughts; Johnny Graham had not known that there were such things as women's colleges. There were primary schools and high schools and "pay" schools, where he supposed the swells sent their children, but his knowledge never went further than this.

"A college for girls!" Well, why not? He believed girls were smarter than boys any day in the year; anyway his Annie was. He thought about it constantly, as he walked to and from his work, to save something for that inheritance in the bank; and he thought of it while he worked. He spoke of it, when he had the chance, in a tentative way to two or three persons for whom he was doing jobs of gas fitting. Did they ever hear anything of them girls' colleges? What was they like? Did they cost money? Once, in the big morning-room of an old-fashioned house, he spoke to an old lady who sat by the fire while he screwed a lava tip on the burner over the mantelpiece. She was an old woman and rich, and so she ought to know about such things, Johnny Graham reasoned; so, with the respectful guilelessness of the American workman, he cleared his throat and said, he wondered, now, if she was knowing anything about girls' colleges?

The old woman started, and seemed to see him for the first time, and put on her glasses to inspect him.

"What did you say, my good man?" she inquired.

Johnny, unoffended by this offensive term, which means "*you are not so good as I am*," repeated his question mumblingly, with the old lava tip between his lips.

"I have a girl I'm thinking of sending to one of them institutions," he explained.

The old lady frowned, and took off her glasses, and tapped them on the arm of her chair.

"You will make a great mistake, my good man. It is a great mistake to educate your daughter above her position."

Johnny took the lava tip out of his mouth and stared at her.

"Well, now, ma'am," he said, in his slow way, "I don't see how you make that out. An American girl is an American girl; no matter how you look at it. You can't educate her above that."

Upon which the old lady nodded her head, and said: "Yes, yes; of course; this is what I've always said; *this* is what we are coming to!"

And Johnny Graham rolled up his tools in his greasy leather apron, and went home, pondering deeply. He was not in the least angry at the old lady; he was simply incapable of understanding her. But that night he thought it over, and pointed out to himself that, after all, if Annie's mind was set that way, there was no use in her waiting to spend her money till he was dead and gone.

"I'll probably be livin' twenty years yet," he thought, after some calculation, "and Annie maybe would be too old for a girls' college then. She'd better go now; and anyway, it might be a good investment of the money; she maybe might set up as a teacher, after she got learned. They do say Councilman Welch's daughter got four hundred dollars for teachin' in the Primary School; and that's twenty per cent. interest on two thousand dollars. I believe it's a good thing!"

It was then that Annie came in, looking, it chanced, a little pale and, perhaps, a little wistful. Annie was not discontented; she had no aspirations; only the child was vaguely aware of an emptiness in her life. And she had stopped at the Public Library as she came home from her work, and had read an article in a magazine concerning a College for Women in another State.

"That's what I'd do, if I were rich," she thought, as she walked home. "I'd go there and study."

So she was a little absent, even when she kissed her father, and heard him tell all about the big house where the rich old woman lived all by herself, because she had quarreled with her only daughter.

"Seems strange, now, to quarrel with your children," said Johnny, buttering his bread on the table-cloth, and then, tilting his chair back, eating it with great contentment.

After supper he told Annie what he had planned for her. Her amazement at her father's wealth was almost as keen a delight to Johnny as was her impetuous refusal to use it, and her passionate tears because he was "so good" to her; almost as keen a joy as her final yielding to the logic of his urging, that, after all, the family would be better off if she could teach, and earn a big salary. "Six hundred dollars, maybe," he said, stretching his imagination for the purpose of convincing her.

So it was arranged. Annie Graham was to go away to study; she was to fit herself to be a teacher; she was to be educated into her father's intellectual superior; she was to be raised "above her station." Would it be a failure or a success? Would she be happy or most miserable? Would the little, dull, loving, ignorant gas-fitter hold or lose his girl?

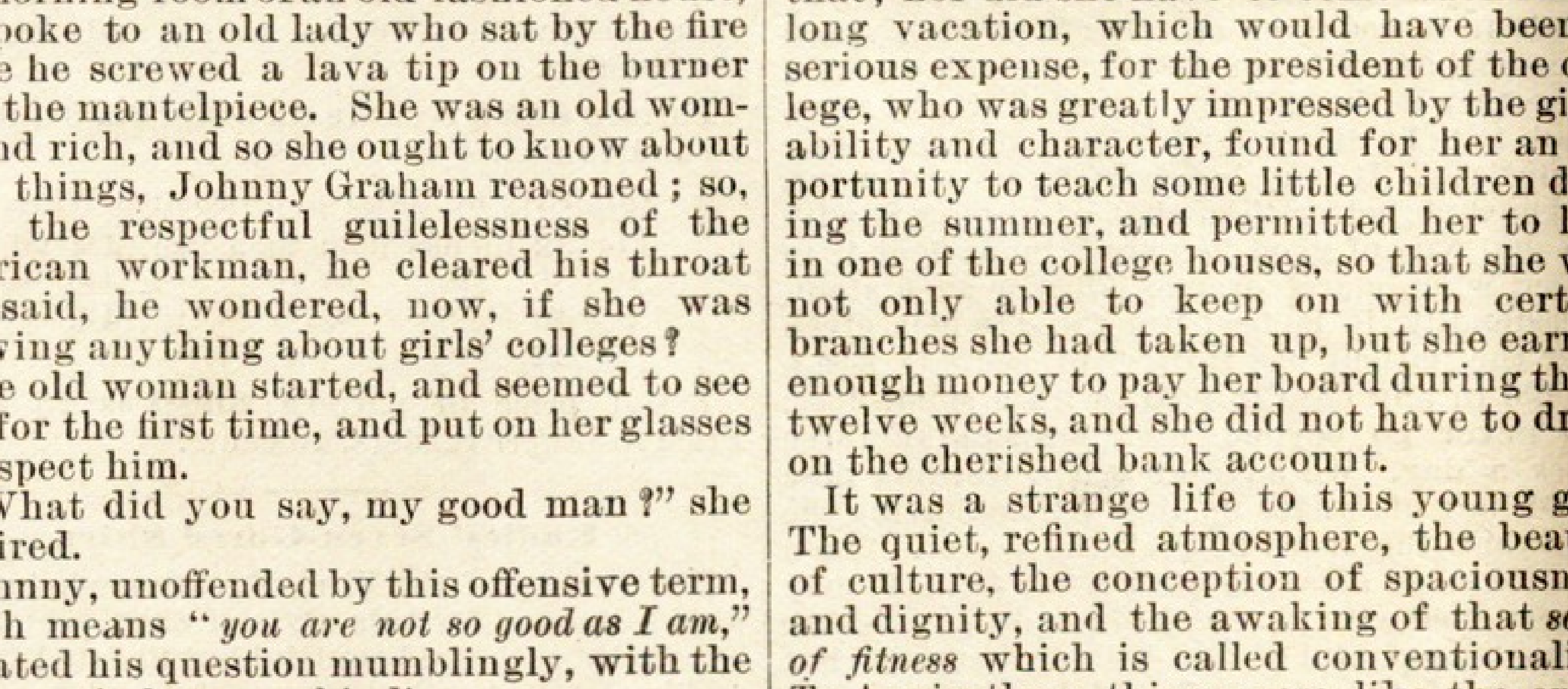
Well, it all depends upon how you look at it!

*   *   *   *   *   *

The result of the talk that night was that in September Annie took the long, expensive journey East, and entered on her four years' course of study. Of course, there was no coming home for the holidays; the fifteen hundred dollars in the bank would not stand that; nor did she have to come back in the long vacation, which would have been a serious expense, for the president of the college, who was greatly impressed by the girl's ability and character, found for her an opportunity to teach some little children during the summer, and permitted her to live in one of the college houses, so that she was not only able to keep on with certain branches she had taken up, but she earned enough money to pay her board during those twelve weeks, and she did not have to draw on the cherished bank account.

It was a strange life to this young girl. The quiet, refined atmosphere, the beauty of culture, the conception of spaciousness and dignity, and the awaking of that *sense of fitness* which is called conventionality. To Annie these things were like the opening of the eyes of one born blind. By degrees the small niceties of life revealed themselves to her; the delicacies of serving, the delicacies of living, the delicacies of manner, and voice, and thought. She felt them all with a passionate sort of joy.

It is curious to observe that by the pure and virgin mind these things, which may be so worthless in their lifeless formality, are seen in their real and fundamental nobility, and are accepted with the instinct of religion. At first, Annie was so normally unconscious of her antecedents that it did not occur to her to proclaim that all these things were new. And then, by and by, having eaten of this tree of the knowledge of good and evil, there came to her a certain deep, spiritual experience: she recognized how the root of conventionality, the beginning of the sense of fitness, lay in character; therefore she knew no shame that her father ate with his knife, or sat in his shirt sleeves, or did many unlovely things. She did not like them; but she knew no shame, only love. But it was then that, very simply,



PABST
MILWAUKEE
THE ART OF BREWING WAS DEVELOPED BY THE GERMANS
SUPREME AWARD WORLD'S FAIR

Pabst Malt Extract
The "Best" Tonic
Gives to the weak and enervated vital energy lifting one from despondency to buoyant happiness.

GOLD MEDAL AND DIPLOMA, CONSTITUTING HIGHEST AWARD, MUNICH INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION, 1895. AN UNPARALLELED VICTORY IN THE VERY HOME OF BREWING.

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she took occasion to say that her father, who was a mechanic, had sent her here to college. She said this because she recognized another point of view, and recognizing it, felt a certain lack of straightforwardness in keeping silent, and also because she was proud of Johnny Graham; and then she forgot it. It was too unimportant to think of.

She assimilated all these new ideas, and felt them, and lived them, as though she had been to the manner born. Her very face reflected them. She was almost a beautiful young woman. Her deep eyes looked out from under her straight, pure brows with a certain high directness of glance and tranquil self-poise which gave a sense of breeding which was inescapable. The fact that she had said that she was poor was only in its way another proof of her superiority—so some of the college girls said, who went into schoolgirl ecstasies about her.

“You know it’s vulgar to be rich,” a young man told her one evening, as they talked together in the June dusk. It was Annie’s fifth year, and for the first time she was going home in the long vacation. A scholarship, and four summers of teaching some little children in a country house on the outskirts of the village, had meant that for the last two years Johnny Graham’s bank account had been recuperating, a very, very little; at all events, there had been no drain upon it. And now Annie was going home. She had won the highest honors of her class, and had even been offered a position on the college staff, and her happiness was as frank as a child’s.

But as Commencement approached, an excitement that she did not understand—an excitement which was not part of this happiness—took possession of her.

“In so many weeks I’ll see father. In so many days—” And now it had come to Saturday evening, and she was to start home Monday night. She was walking back from her little pupils’ house, where she had said good-bye until September. She was not alone.

A certain Dick Temple, a cousin of her pupils’ mother, had a way of running down from town to spend Sundays with the Pauls, to play, he said, with the children, and get in some rowing on the river, and to exercise his Cousin John’s polo ponies, and—to see Annie Graham.

But this last was not so stated in the bond.

He had a way of appearing in time to walk across the campus with her, after little Kate’s music lesson Saturday afternoon, and once or twice he had beguiled her into his boat, and they had gone floating down the river in the twilight, talking of everything in heaven or earth. Being young, religion had been their first theme; and then, by and by, love; in the abstract, of course. A month ago, they both had feared themselves incapable of experiencing this beautiful emotion; Annie, because she was going to devote herself to study and her father; Dick, because he had outlived such things, and was very bitter and cynical, and mysterious in his allusions to life, which he said *he* knew. Sometimes they talked of their future; and it was then that Annie had told him, smiling, that she had no such luxurious prospects as he had been outlining.

They were walking, slowly, under the great elms toward her door; it had rained earlier in the day, and the worn bricks of the narrow pavement held, here and there, shallow pools of water; the sun struck across the wet grass in a low flood of gold; and there was the scent of young leaves and roses in the air.

“We are poor people,” Annie had said, with an amused look; “I’m going to teach school and wear spectacles, and be very stern and learned.”

“Ah, well,” returned the young man, “it’s the thing to be poor, nowadays; it’s awfully vulgar to be rich! It’s queer, now, when you think of it, Miss Graham, how many people in our class have lost their money, isn’t it?”

“We’ve never had it to lose,” Annie said; “the family fortunes are to rise on school teaching.”

Dick glanced at her with quick admiration in his handsome young eyes. He was twenty-four, but he blundered over his words like a school-boy.

“Miss Graham,” he said, “you won’t mind if I say I think it’s awfully fine in you, don’t you know, to teach, and all that sort of thing? Of course, girls do things now. I mean nice girls, don’t you know. Why, Cousin Kate gave music lessons before she married; and she was a Townsend. Still, it’s people like that, don’t you know, that can afford to do things like that!”

“I don’t suppose any one can afford to be dependent,” Annie said, simply, “and my father is really poor, Mr. Temple.”

Her beautiful, direct look as she said this made the young fellow’s heart suddenly leap. He wanted to burst out and tell her how much he admired her; admired? no, loved her! That was the word. Yes, *he*, who had thought he had outlived all that sort of thing. All in a moment he felt that he wanted to tell her this; but she seemed so remote that he dared not speak.

“I suppose I ought to get my governor to go and call on hers,” he thought to himself; “these decayed gentlefolks are death on propriety. But maybe she wouldn’t look at me, anyway,” he added to himself, in a miserable afterthought; for she began to speak in such an interested way of some mathematical work she had to do that night, that he felt there was no room for him in her thoughts; and he left her at the college door and went back, ardent and despairing, to confide in his cousin Kate, who had, it must be admitted, rather a startled expression when he told her he was all bowled over by Miss Graham.

“But, Dick, what would your father say if it got serious? Cousin Henry has such ideas, you know. She’s a charming girl, but we don’t know anything about her people.”

“We know they are poor,” Dick said, boldly; “but that doesn’t matter in the least. Surely, *you* are not so narrow, Cousin Kate, as to think it matters?”

“No, that doesn’t matter, of course,” Cousin Kate said, doubtfully.

* * * * * *

As for Annie, she went, smiling a little, and blushing a little, upstairs to her room. But she did no work in higher mathematics that night.

Instead, she finished her packing, and wrote her last semi-weekly letter of the term to her father. To be sure, he would get it just a day or two before she came herself; but she would not have had Johnny Graham miss that Saturday letter for a good deal. She knew how he would carry it about in his pocket, and read it over and over, and put it on the wooden chair beside his bed at night. Perhaps it was a little more affectionate, this last letter, than usual: she told him about the weather, and that she should start on Monday, and would telegraph him when to expect her. And something of the progress of her two pupils; and how she had made an experiment in the laboratory, and had burned her fingers; and—and that she had met an interesting man, a cousin of Mrs. Paul’s. He had taken her out rowing once or twice, she said. And, oh! she was so happy that she was coming home! She could hardly believe it was true, she was so glad. And then she said she was always, always his little girl who loved him—“Annie.”

Then she put her head down on her arms, folded on her writing-table, and shivered once or twice, and there were tears in her eyes when she rose, and, with the delicate feeling for order which is inherent in the refined woman, began to put her room to rights for the night.

“When he said ‘our class,’ ought I to have spoken?” she asked herself, shrinking in her thought, not from the confession, but the implied slight to Johnny Graham. “Besides he knows; I told Mrs. Paul,” she reminded herself. “No, no, I *couldn’t!*” And all her love and all her pride for her father rebelled against seeming to admit that he was less gentle in soul than any one else.

Dick Temple saw her at church the next Sunday and walked home with her; although she kept all the while on Mrs. Paul’s right, while Dick had to walk on the outside and could only look across at her, which did not please him in the least. She laughed a little about going home “like a stranger and foreigner,” she said.

“I haven’t seen South Bend for nearly five years; you know it is such an expensive journey.”

Mrs. Paul said yes, she supposed it was. “It takes four days and five nights to get there, doesn’t it? It seems to me I passed through it once. I suppose those Western places are very progressive, aren’t they? They are not shocked at the idea of a university education for women. One runs up against that here very often.”

Annie shook her head, smiling.

“Isn’t it funny to think that people do really feel that it is unfeminine, ‘threatening to the womanly woman,’ as they say!”

“I’ve come to think that the ‘womanly woman’ means the brainless woman,” Mrs. Paul said.

“What fools people are who feel that way about the higher education of women. It’s incredible!” Dick broke in. “Miss Graham, I shall be passing through South Bend in a fortnight or so; may I call?”

“Of course, I shall be delighted to see you,” Annie said, “and my father will be so glad to see any friend of Mrs. Paul’s; he knows how kind you have been to me,” she ended, with an affectionate look at Dick’s cousin.

Then Mr. Temple, with an eager timidity so foreign to him that Mrs. Paul suppressed a smile with difficulty, wondered if Miss Graham would have time to go out on the river that evening? He knew she would be awfully busy; but it would be a heavenly evening on the river! He was so promptly assured that she should not have time that the poor fellow looked very blank, and was distinctly cross in the family circle for the rest of the day. At night he softened and tried to be pleasant, for he was constrained to be confidential, and he knew that “Cousin Kate” would not hesitate to snub him unless he made himself agreeable.

“Now, really, don’t you think she’s very unusual?” he insisted, after having told Mrs. Paul all the pleasant things which he could remember which Miss Graham had said to him about her two little pupils.

“If you mean Miss Graham, why, yes, I do think she’s unusual, Dick.”

“Did you ever notice,” said the fatuous Dick, “how softly her hair grows around her forehead? And her eyes—what color are her eyes?”

“I’m sure I can’t say,” Mrs. Paul answered dryly. “Dick, would you mind going in and getting me a shawl? It’s rather cool out here on the terrace.” When he came back she had made up her mind how to proceed. “Now, Dick, listen. I’m not a snob, but—”

“If you are going to say anything about that beautiful creature’s working for her living,” Dick threatened, “you might as well stop on the spot.”

“Of course I’m not going to say anything about her working for her living; why should I? I worked for my living before I married John. You *know* I’m not a snob, but I do believe in class. I don’t mean to be unkind, and certainly she is a charming girl, and—ladylike. But—there is something—I can’t tell what it is—that seems as if she had not always been used to things—”

Dick Temple said something between his teeth, and his cousin flung her head up.

“Dick!”

“Well, it makes a man want to be emphatic, Cousin Kate,—such nonsense! *Class?* We’re Americans, thank the Lord! But that’s nothing to do with it; I feel as though I were insulting her even to declare that she is as fine a lady, as true a gentlewoman as was ever born. She shows it in everything—her voice, her manner, the way she carries her head. Talk about ancestors, I never saw descent so plainly. Darn it, because a girl’s poor—”

“Good night, Richard,” said Mrs. Paul, rising with great dignity.

“Oh, hold on! Don’t get mad. Hold your base. I apologize; only it seems pretty hard to be down on a girl—”

“You know I’m not down on her; I like her very much; I respect her very much.”

“Well, then, what’s the matter?” demanded Dick, boldly.

“I don’t know. Only I have a vague recollection that when she came to teach the children she mentioned, in a casual sort of way, something about—about her home, or her father and mother, or something. I can’t really remember, but I know I gained the impression that she was—”

“Poor?” Dick burst in. “Of course she’s poor. She has never made any secret of that. Why should she? Only a cad would do that.”

“I didn’t mean poor,” Mrs. Paul said, frowning. “I wish you would have some manners, Dick, and not interrupt. I merely mean that a young man has no right to pay attention to a girl in another class unless he means to follow it up. I despise a trifler, Dick.”

“You don’t despise him any more than I do,” Dick returned, loftily. “But there isn’t any question of class here. We don’t have any higher class than hers; and as for ‘following it up,’ as you say—if a fellow thought that there was any chance for him with that woman, he’d follow it up quick enough, and ask her to marry him! Yes, and he ought to do it as formally as though she were a princess. She *is* a princess! He ought to go and ask her father if he *might* ask her. Her poverty, which seems to trouble you so much, Cousin Kate, has no bearing on the situation.”

Poor Dick was smarting with Annie’s apparent coldness and his cousin’s snobbishness—so he called it—but that was no excuse for bursting out at Mrs. Paul in this way, and it was really no wonder that she said good night with some asperity and went upstairs and told her husband that Dick was a perfect goose, besides being rather a cub.

“He’s twenty-four and old enough to know better,” she said. “You know I’m not a snob, John; but there’s no use denying it—there *is* such a thing as class, and Dick will find it out. But she’s a dear, sweet girl. Oh, dear, I wish his father was here!”

“You’d better wish her father was here; then you’d know the pit whence she was digged,” John Paul said. “Of course, if he ever sold cotton by the yard Dick’s future happiness would be imperilled.”

“Now, John, don’t be horrid,” said his wife, impatiently; “you know perfectly well what I mean.”

“If Dick’s worth anything,” proceeded John Paul, standing before his glass and ripping his collar off the stud with a vicious tug, “he’ll marry that girl if her father is a hod-carrier.”

CHAPTER II.

Five years! It was a long time. Johnny, standing in the railroad station, his heart beating high with pride and joy, couldn’t help crying out when he saw her:

“Why, now, you’ve growed, Annie! Bless my heart, if you ain’t growed!” But his eyes were misty, so perhaps it was that made his little Annie look so tall. He had not recognized her for a moment, this lady, who, with the tears trembling in her eyes, came up to him and took his hands and cried out “Father!” Afterward he said he didn’t know why he had taken her for a lady, for, sakes alive, her clothes were plain enough. He was quite distressed about her clothes.

“You’ve stinted yourself, Annie,” he reproached her as they went home in the street cars. “You ought to be havin’ a silk dress, lookin’ the way you do. Why, I took you for a lady, Annie. You ought to have fine clothes, my pretty; we’ll take some money out of the bank and get you a regular silk dress,” he told her, scolding her and loving her, and bursting with pride, and taking up their intercourse just where it had paused, five years ago. She was a pretty girl and a great learner, Johnny thought; but she was just his Annie.

It was late when they got home. He had left the kitchen fire clear and ready for the steak Annie would broil, and the gas was flaring wide from new burners, and Johnny had bought a long plush scarf for the top of the mantelpiece over the kitchen range. When Annie was fairly in the house, and the door was shut, it seemed as though the happiness of heaven had come into the little kitchen. Johnny laughed, and drew the back of his hand across his nose, and sniffed and blinked, and the tears ran freely down his little thin cheeks. He walked round and round Annie in critical inspection; and ran her from room to room, even up to Dave Duggan’s attic, to show her how unchanged everything was. He made her come into the parlor and showed her the faded ribbons and tottering plush frames.

“I dusted ’em every Sunday, Annie,” he said. And then he told her how he had turned out the person to whom he had rented her old room. “Well, now, he was set on staying,” Johnny said; “he was always sayin’ he wanted to see you; but I guess Dave Duggan was just as well pleased not to have him round. Dave ain’t married yet, Annie,” then Johnny laughed very much, and added, winking at his own joke, he guessed Dave had forgotten her, she’d been away so long.

The wonderful thing about it all, and the beautiful thing about it all, was that this little man did not in the least care that his Annie was an educated woman; he did not even know it.

It seemed as if Annie could not show enough the tenderness that made her heart ache with its swelling. She sat beside him, holding his work-roughened hands in hers, and told him over and over about these five years which he had given her; she knew, and she was feeling as she spoke, how every joy of study, how every pang of the happiness of appreciation had come from these patient, loving, grimy old hands. “*You’ve given me everything,*” her heart was saying, “and I *do* love you. I can never say how much.” But it seemed as though her heart was weeping in her bosom, as though it were saying: “Why, *why* did you put me where I was to learn that you were you, and I was I?”

One looks on at such a situation and says, “If it could stop here, it might be possible.” But it cannot stop there. It is not the adjustment of the relations between parents and child which is the difficult thing. The

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Best. Rest. Test.

There are two kinds of sarsaparilla: **The best — and the rest.** The trouble is they look alike. And when the rest dress like the best who’s to tell them apart? Well, “the tree is known by its fruit.” That’s an old test and a safe one. And the taller the tree the deeper the root. That’s another test. What’s the root, — the record of these sarsaparillas? The one with the deepest root is Ayer’s. The one with the richest fruit; that, too, is Ayer’s. Ayer’s Sarsaparilla has a record of half a century of cures; a record of many medals and awards — culminating in the medal of the Chicago World’s Fair, which, admitting Ayer’s Sarsaparilla as the best — shut its doors against the rest. That was greater honor than the medal, to be the only Sarsaparilla admitted as an exhibit at the World’s Fair. **If you want to get the best sarsaparilla of your druggist, here’s an infallible rule: Ask for the best and you’ll get Ayer’s. Ask for Ayer’s and you’ll get the best.**

acceptance of a different point of view by these three may even come without much pain. No, it is the outsiders who make the situation impossible—the father's cronies, the mother's friends, the acquaintances of the untaught girlhood. The impossibility revealed itself that very night when Dave Duggan came in to welcome her home. Annie gave him her hand, flushing and paling at his familiarity, his boisterous, facetious "Hello, Annie! How you was?" In him, after that easy greeting, the first note of the difference made for all time was struck; for he grew conscious and uneasy, and scuffled his feet, and cleared his throat, and laughed in a silly way. Yet all the old admiration spoke in his eyes. Johnny was full of jokes, and kept elbowing Annie and winking; and Dave's loud rebukes of his host's "fun" were even more meaning.

At nearly midnight Annie went upstairs, tired, white, smiling; and lay open-eyed until dawn.

* * * * * *

Dick Temple's intention of "passing through South Bend in a fortnight" was a little delayed. Cousin Kate's vague misgivings took the form of a postscript in a casual note to his mother; there was no more than a word or two about Dick's *tendresse* for a pretty college girl, who had been the children's governess during the last three summers while they were out of town; that was all. But it was enough. And Mrs. Paul felt she had done her duty.

"And, perhaps, prevented Dick from doing his," her husband commented, grimly.

"If he *can* be prevented, he'd better be; for he wouldn't be good enough for Annie Graham!" Cousin Kate declared with much spirit, and immediately became, in her own mind, the champion of the incipient love affair.

Her letter was passed on by Dick's mother to Dick's father, who said, good-naturally, that the boy was a jackass.

"The young lady is probably too good for him," said Mr. Henry Temple, "but I'm not going to have that boy marrying John Paul's governess without a few remarks from me."

Mr. Temple telegraphed his son not to leave town on the day he had arranged, as he wished to see him; and then he came down from the Maine woods for the purpose of making the remarks, which, of course, were to be general; it would give the matter too much importance to treat it as particular or probable. So, in a casual way, he referred to Cousin Kate's letter, and enjoined his son not to be a fool. Dick's instantly aggressive attitude and skill in "answering back" were most surprising to Mr. Temple. A man is always surprised at his son's ability in this direction; it is as though his own hand or foot suddenly acquired individuality. Furthermore, Richard was very sentimental, and had much to say of his father's un-American point of view and his own readiness to marry "a woman he loved" (if she'd have him) if she were a washerwoman.

"As for Miss Graham," said Dick, "I've no right even to speak of her; but she's a lady, and an angel—"

"Oh, Lord!" groaned Mr. Temple. "I wonder if I ever was as young as you, Dickon?" But he was really disturbed, and wrote to a friend who owned the great South Bend Rolling and Smelting Furnaces, and might be expected to know who and what the Grahams were.

Meantime, Dick Temple, twice as much in earnest for his father's not unreasonable expostulation, packed his things and started for the West. It was a hot July afternoon when he arrived in South Bend; he was fretted by the heat and his own impatience and the stupidity of the landlord of the hotel in being unable to tell him where Mr. Graham lived.

"There's no family by that name on the hill, sir," he said. "Graham—Graham—there's some Grahams here in the directory; what's the gentleman's business, sir?"

"I don't know," Dick said, fuming. "What sort of a place is this, anyhow, that you don't know where people live? It's small enough for you to know everybody—"

"We've twenty thousand inhabitants, young man," said the landlord, with much offense. "The only Graham I know is Johnny; he's a gas-fitter, and does odd jobs here once in awhile—"

"Have your clerk copy all those Graham addresses," said Dick, coldly. "I'll go round till I find the person I wish. Unfortunately I don't know the gentleman's first name. Have you got any kind of conveyance in this place? Just have a hack called, will you?"

He spoke with the insolence of tone peculiar to well-bred young men, and he walked to the open door and stood waiting for the carriage and frowning out at the passers-by. There was a red glare from the furnaces on the other side of the river, shifting and fading on the coils of black smoke which lay motionless in the still, hot air. The street was the narrow, unlovely street of the manufacturing town of the West.

"It's a beastly place, anyhow," Dick said to himself with an irritation which had its root in some formless apprehension; and he got into the lumbering, rattling hack and slammed the door with vicious emphasis. "What on earth does he live here for?" he said to himself.

The carriage drew up first at a small market, where piles of faded vegetables, flanked by glass cases of meat, jutted out upon the pavement; a man in a dirty white butcher's frock leaned against the door-post, and two jets of gas flared and flickered from long, iron stand-pipes.

The driver leaned down from his box and called out in friendly tones to know if this was the place.

"Idiot!" said Dick under his breath. "Of course not. Try the next address."

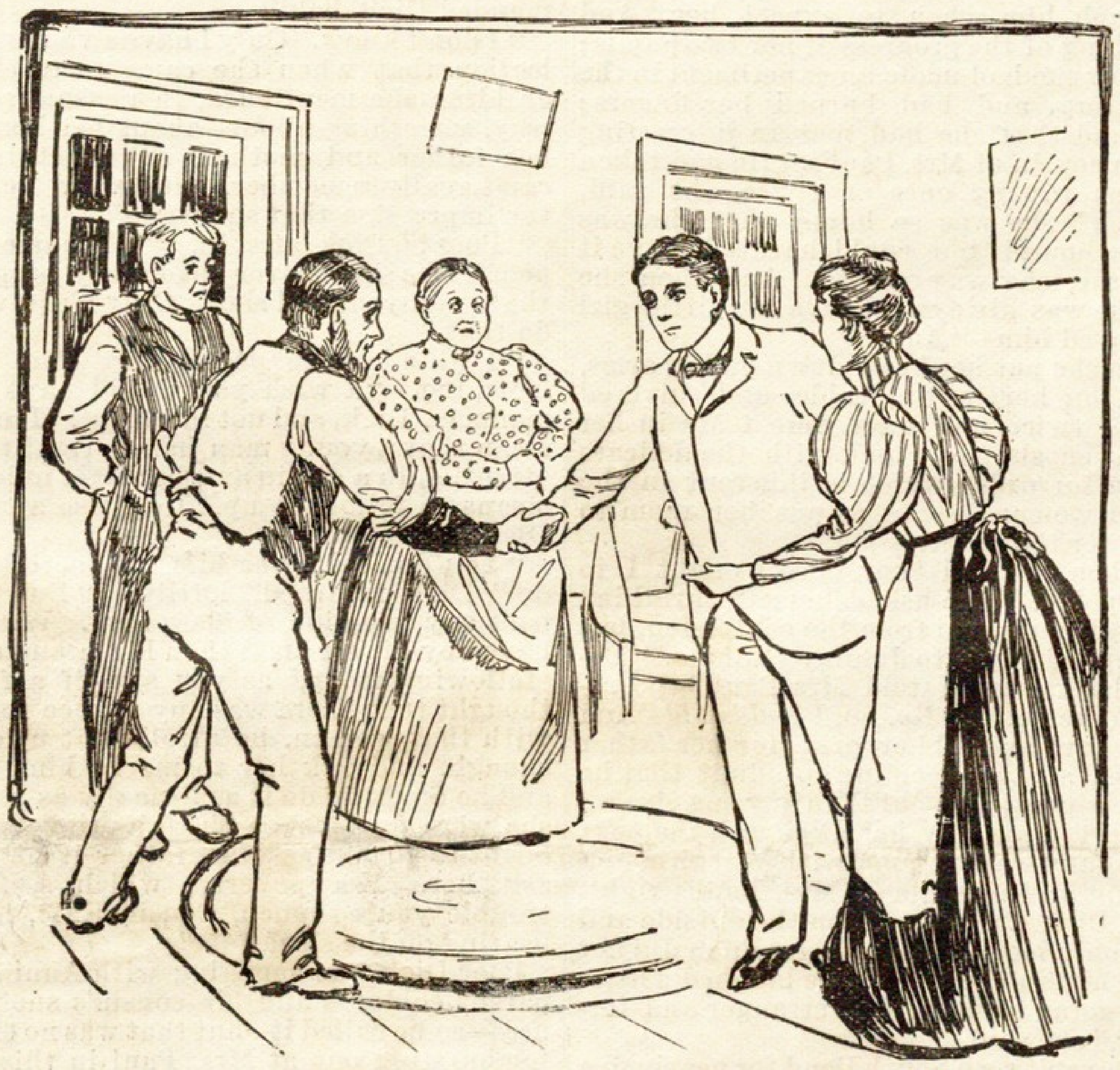
This was a forlorn, untidy-looking house on a side street. Lodgers' heads leaned out of some of the windows as Dick climbed the steps and inquired whether Miss Annie Graham lived there? He was conscious of a distinct relief when he went back again to the carriage. They went to two other houses, but there was no Miss Annie Graham.

"I guess," said the hackman, "we'll have to cross over to the other side of the river. There's a Graham over there, at Jack's Corners. Jack's Corners is a fine suburb, sir."

Dick's heart rose.

"All right; go on," he said. "Can't you hurry those beasts of yours up?"

And so it was that, about six o'clock, the cabman drew up before a small, detached frame house on the Mill Road. It was so hot that the kitchen windows were wide open, and one could see the table drawn up between them, and a little man in his shirt sleeves eating his supper. Opposite him, by the other window, was a girl with a fan in her hand, and between them were two other persons, for Johnny was entertaining that night. Dave Duggan, uncomfortable, he knew not why (although it certainly was not the weather, for he had, with great good sense, removed his coat), sat on Annie's left; and next to him, beside Johnny, was an enormously fat woman, in a sort of loose, white sack. This was Mrs. Pugsley, who was one of those neighboring ladies of thwarted stepmother potentialities. "But you never know what'll happen," Mrs. Pugsley often remarked, and dropped in this hot July night in a friendly way, to see if Annie was making her father comfortable. It was Mrs. Pugsley's opinion that all this learning wasn't no good. "Better know how to dish a meal's victuals," said Mrs. Pugsley, "than be readin' story papers all the time. That's what them high-school girls does mostly."



"FATHER, DEAR, THIS IS MR. TEMPLE."

The room was faintly lighted by a kerosene lamp on the mantelpiece; but the real radiance was in Johnny's face, as he looked across a bunch of roses in the middle of the narrow table at his Annie.

"Annie walked out two miles to get them flowers," he said.

"Must 'a' wanted something to do," said Mrs. Pugsley.

"I'd 'a' got 'em for you, Annie," Dave said bashfully, "if I'd a-known you wanted 'em." And it was just then that the carriage drew up at the door.

Dick, disgusted at the coachman's stupidity in bringing him into this obviously mechanic's suburb, leaned out to say, "Drive on!" He was hot and disappointed and impatient and—apprehensive.

And then he saw her.

There was evidently a flutter in the tenement at seeing a hack draw up. Johnny Graham rose, seeing, in a sudden burst of fancy, an important and hasty job, and a carriage sent to convey him to a wilderness of leaks or broken tips. Mrs. Pugsley conceived the hack to be a summons from a lady friend who had expected to need her services on a felicitous occasion, and was instantly agitated, and got up panting and saying:

"Goodness! they've sent!"

But Annie knew.

One wonders if she flinched, there in the twilight? She rose at once and went to the front door, her hand outstretched in pleased welcome.

"Why, Mr. Temple! This is very pleasant," she said. "Father, dear, this is Mr. Temple."

Dick's face was white. He took Johnny Graham's hand and bowed, with some murmured reference to pleasure.

"This is my friend Mr. Duggan, Mr. Temple," Annie went on placidly, "and Mrs. Pugsley."

Dick bowed twice. He saw dimly, in the dusky kitchen interior, the two other figures, one of whom, assisted by the other, was struggling into his coat.

"Why, now, set down, sir," Johnny said, joyously; "take a seat and set down. Annie, now, can't you make room there by Dave? We was just setting out to eat our tea, sir; but I guess there's something left for you."

"You're very kind, but—" Dick protested, feebly; but he sat down, too bewildered to find any excuse.

Annie put a plate before him, and told him he must have some iced tea.

"It's the only thing that makes life possible in this weather," she said; "but I can't make father believe it; he takes his boiling."

"Well, sir," said Johnny, "you had quite a jaunt to get out here, didn't you? But I don't mind the walk, myself, back and forth from my work, for it's fresher out here."

"I didn't know your address," Dick said, not looking at Annie; "I've been driving round—"

"When I saw that carriage drive up," Mrs. Pugsley said, still panting, "I thought a lady friend of mine had sent for me; it give me such a start!"

"Tell me how you left Mrs. Paul?" Annie asked.

"Oh, thanks, very well," Dick assured her, and there was a moment's pause. Mrs. Pugsley and Dave were blankly silent. Annie talked against time.

"It was so nice to get home. Just think, I had been away five years," she said: "that's a pretty long time not to see one's father; father didn't know me when he met me at the station;—now, I would have known you, anywhere!" she reproached Johnny, with a loving look.

"Well, but now, you growed, Annie; that's what I said when I saw her. I says, 'why, Annie, you've growed!' Dave, here, don't see no change in her. But I do," Johnny ended proudly.

"You must have missed your daughter very much," Mr. Temple murmured.

"Well, indeed, an' he did," Mrs. Pugsley said, resentfully; "but she would be studyin'. She's that set on it."

"Miss Graham is devoted to mathematics," Dick murmured, miserably, "and—and that sort of thing—"

He stopped so abruptly that Mrs. Pugsley's hoarse whisper to Dave Duggan was audible to all:

"Say, is he Annie's feller?"

"Hush!" said Dave Duggan.

Dick drank his tumbler of iced tea with violent haste, and even Johnny looked disconcerted. Annie said something about the roses.

"The thing I miss most in South Bend are the gardens," she said. "You know we are all working people on this side of the river, and there are no old houses, so there are no beautiful big gardens. I had to walk far out into the country for those."

"Won't you have anything more?" Johnny inquired, hospitably. "Take another helping of something? You won't? Oh, now, take a taste of this! No? Well, let's go into the parlor, Annie."

If Annie held back, no one saw it. They went into the best room, where Johnny set all the gas-burners flaring, that the full glories of the decorations might strike the visitor, who, indeed, saw nothing but Annie's stern, set face.

"Miss Graham," he said, "you are coming East again in September, aren't you?"

"I think not. I think I must never leave father again. He is not very strong, and I want to be with him."

"Oh, yes, quite so," Dick answered, "but—"

"But what, Mr. Temple?"

"Oh, nothing; I only thought—I thought you were to teach in the college, and—"

He did not know how to end his sentence; he caught Dave Duggan's eyes glowering at him, and Johnny's rather obsequious smile. Johnny had the true American veneration for wealth, and he felt that this gentleman, who kept a hack waiting for an hour, was a rich man.

"I shall never leave my father," Annie said, in a low voice.

Now Richard Temple was not a mean or unworthy man; he was a well-born, well-bred, well-educated young American gentleman; but he had been placed suddenly at a cruel disadvantage; his presence of mind deserted him—he was bewildered and confounded. His plans and hopes were all adrift. He could not meet Annie Graham's eyes again; he said good night, at first haughtily and then effusively, and sneaked out to his carriage, anxious only to escape from an intolerable situation.

"Hope you'll come out and talk over old times with Annie, sir," Johnny said, shaking Dick's hand all the time that he was speaking; "you'll call again, sir?"

"Oh, certainly, yes, of course," Dick answered, wretchedly.

But Annie knew better.

* * * * * *

Dave Duggan had watched Annie's visitor with burning eyes. He followed the conversation with painful intentness, and a sense of speed which made him breathless; he wished to join in it,—kept moistening his lips and clearing his throat, but never found the courage to speak. His shyness probably prevented him from being rude; for his feeling about Dick was rage, pure and simple.

"He's a blamed dude," he thought to himself, again and again; but he could think of nothing to say which would convey this opinion, and yet fit into the conversation. But when Dick had slunk back to his carriage Dave's feelings burst forth. For a few moments, indeed, the little group (except Annie) talked, in their excitement, all together.

"Ain't he handsome!" Johnny said, proudly; he was proud of anything connected with Annie.

"He's real rich, Annie, ain't he? Ridin' in hacks?" Mrs. Pugsley demanded.

"He's a blamed dude, that's what he is," Dave said fiercely.

"I thought he was your feller, Annie," Mrs. Pugsley declared, panting and fanning herself.

"Well, now, he's none too good to be," Johnny announced, chuckling.

"Father, dear, wouldn't it be nicer to sit out on the steps, where it's cooler? I'll put the things away, and then I'll come, too. Please—*go!*" she ended. Johnny looked at her in quick surprise, sensitive to every change in her voice.

"Why, now—Annie?" he faltered.

"I'll be through with the dishes in a few minutes, father dear," she said; and so Johnny led the way to the front door and placed a chair on the hard, black earth at the foot of the steps for Mrs. Pugsley, and told Dave to take off his coat again.

"It's that hot," Johnny said, "there's no good wearin' coats."

"Now that dude's gone, I suppose there's no harm being comfortable," Dave agreed, angrily.

They sat there in the dusk, Johnny and Mrs. Pugsley, talking the visit over. They could hear Annie moving about in the kitchen, washing the dishes. After awhile Dave Duggan got up, and with painstaking and elaborate efforts not to attract attention, went, with creaking, clumsy steps, into the kitchen. Annie stood by the sink, with her back to him. He heard her draw in her breath in a broken sob; and then he saw—he saw the tears were running down her face.

"*Annie!*" he said; "oh, now, Annie, don't, don't mind, Annie dear!" He put out his hands beseechingly, his face red and quivering. Annie turned her shoulder toward him, and set her teeth. She drew her wrist across her eyes.

"It's that dude's hurt your feelin's, Annie, darn him; but never you mind, he ain't worth—"

"Oh, please go away, Dave," Annie said; "you don't know what you are talking about! Please go back to father."

"Annie," he burst out, "look here, he ain't worth it. I say, Annie, *will you take up with me?*"

"I really don't know what you are talking about. Mr. Temple—if you are referring to him—has not hurt my feeliings in the

Don't simply *blacken* your stove—*burnish it.*

ENAMELINE

—the brilliant black—

STOVE POLISH

does both.

A few rubs brings a bright gloss. Dustless and odorless.

Sold Everywhere.

least. I—I had something on my mind, and—"

"Oh, Annie," poor Davė said, "what I'm wanting to know—" He stood there in his shirt-sleeves beside the sink, his voice trembling, one big, red hand opening and shutting the hot-water spigot, "I'm just wanting to know if you'll marry me, Annie? Say, now, will you?"

She shrank from him, a sort of horror in her face.

"*You?*"

"You ain't mad?" he entreated.

"It is quite impossible," she answered, hoarsely, "quite, *quite*. Never speak to me of such a thing—" Her face was stinging, her voice broken, as a woman's might be to whom some insulting thing had been said. "You will go, if you please," she ended, her head high, and with a certain gesture that confounded him.

"But look a here," he insisted, following her as she moved away from him; "Annie, look a here; that feller ain't a goin' to marry anybody but a rich lady; his kind ain't a goin' to marry you."

"Well, I shan't marry my kind, then! You can just understand that," she cried, with a sudden, almost coarse fury. "There's no use for you to think of such a thing. Don't ever dare to speak to me that way again!"

This is as far as Annie Graham has lived her story. She and Dave practically summed the matter up between them: "His kind will not marry you;" and "I will not marry my kind."

The story is unfinished; one waits to see what will happen.

There are three things open to Annie: She may live out her life in South Bend, teaching, perhaps, in the public school, gradually refining the terrible little house, rejoicing Johnny's heart and never interfering, merely for her own æsthetic necessities, with the unlovely habits of Johnny's fifty years of unlovely living; she may learn to accept his intimates as her acquaintances, his Mrs. Pugsleys and Dave Duggans as household friends, starving all the while for the companionship of her equals. *Or—*

She may shake off these intolerable surroundings which make her shrink as instinctively as an open eye shrinks from dust; she may turn her back upon South Bend and the tenement houses and the painted snow-shovel and her father's shirt-sleeves and her father's tender heart, and go out into the world to live her own strong, refined, intellectual life, perhaps as a teacher in her old college; marrying, after a while, some one who has never seen her father, and coming into the soul-destroying possession of that skeleton in the American closet—the vulgarity of the former generation. *Or—*

She may, because of sheer misery in the struggle between the new and the old, and for the dreadful, suffocating comfort of it, fall back into the pit whence she was digged and try to forget the upper air.

What is the child's duty? To live her own life, or to live some one else's life? Is she to accept success or failure, fulfillment or renunciation?

People differ as to what constitutes success: some go so far as to say that the highest fulfillment lies in renunciation; and certainly there was once a life that might have been called a failure because it ended upon a cross on Calvary.

I suppose it all depends on how you look at it.

THE END.

◆

–Nothing in bath or laundry so good as Borax. Dobbins' Floating Borax Soap needs but one trial to prove its value. Costs same as poorer floating soap. No one has ever tried it without buying more. Your grocer has it. —*a.*

◆

MISTAKEN IDEAS OF THE ARCTIC REGIONS.

Travellers in the far north have often expressed themselves as surprised by the luxuriant growth of vegetation and the abundance of animal life in almost all portions visited. The sportsman readily recognizes many ducks, geese and other aquatic fowl, and the botanist would no doubt be astonished at finding the familiar dandelion at almost every turn, with the saxifrage and other plants, apparently quite as well satisfied with their environment as in our own climate. There are many trees that belong to the same family as in our own regions, the cypress and spruce among others.

◆

–Of ALL the books published, the 1896 Souvenir Catalogue, by Miss C. H. Lippincott, Minneapolis, Minn., devoted exclusively to Flower Seeds, is the most artistic and unique. The phenomenal success of the lady seedswoman proves she has supplied a long-felt want to flower lovers. Every reader of this paper that grows flowers should get a copy of this magnificent book. It is refreshing to see the look of independence in the face of her picture that graces this dainty little catalogue. There is nothing that succeeds like successful women, whether in literature or business. The key of her success is prompt service, best seeds, reasonable prices, beautiful flowers, *by a woman*. The book is *free*. Read carefully Miss Lippincott's advertisement which appears on page 14. —*a.*

ANIMAL HEAT.

The temperature of the body is a little over 98 degrees Fahrenheit, and the atmosphere which is, perhaps, most suited for young children is somewhere between 55 degrees and 65 degrees Fahrenheit; hence it follows that, unless the child has an enormous power of manufacturing and storing animal heat, its temperature will be reduced considerably lower than the normal, and this will be a great risk of life—indeed, in the case of young children such a reduction is incompatible with life.

This animal heat is distributed throughout the body by the blood-vessels, which contain a fluid somewhat higher in temperature than that of the body, and this is circulated freely and rapidly through every part of the body like a system of hot-water pipes.

Food, then, is the main manufacturer of animal heat, the blood-vessels are its distributors, and the surface of the body is the main source of the loss of heat. In order, therefore, to maintain the bodily temperature economically, we must diminish this loss by the application of some non-conducting material to the cooling surface. In children this surface is far greater in proportion to their bulk or weight than in adults. By economizing the animal heat we, therefore, to some extent, economize food. People eat less in summer than in winter, partly because the system requires less to maintain this heat, and in cold countries it becomes essential for people to eat special articles of diet, such as fat, because of their heat-producing properties.

◆

A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY.

The Racine Specialty Co., of Racine, Wis., must have 100 reliable agents to sell 100 first-class articles. Your choice. Exclusive territory. See their advertisement and write at once. —*a.*

◆

—There were two total eclipses of the sun in the year 1712, and two in 1889. This rare phenomenon will not happen again until the year 2057.

◆

FREE TO BALD HEADS.

The Altenheim Medical Dispensary, Room 103, Selves Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, will mail on application free information regarding how to grow hair, stop falling hair and remove scalp diseases. Send at once. —*a.*

◆

CALIFORNIA.

Personally-Conducted Tour via Pennsylvania Railroad.

So beautiful is the scenery of California that Nature must have expended more than her usual energy in its creation, and especially is this true during the months of March and April, when the rainy season has passed and flowers bloom everywhere. Fortunate, indeed, is the person who can exchange the wintry climate of the East for the flower-perfumed and healthful atmosphere of California, and no better method of doing this can be had than by participating in the second "Golden Gate" tour, organized under the perfect personally-conducted tourist system of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

The tourists will leave New York and Philadelphia March 11, 1896, and return to those cities May 7, allowing four and one-half weeks in California.

A new feature to the magnificent train used for these tours in previous years is a through Pullman compartment car.

The car, which will be the very best that the Pullman Company can supply, will contain nine inclosed compartments—two drawing-rooms and seven state-rooms—and will be attached to the special train at Jersey City and run through to San Francisco.

Applications for space or itineraries, giving all information, should be made to Tourist Agent, 1196 Broadway, New York, or Room 411, Broad Street Station, Philadelphia. —*a.*

◆

FLORIDA.

Personally-Conducted Tours via Pennsylvania Railroad.

There is no doubt but that every one has had at some time a desire to visit Florida, the "Land of Flowers," and that many have been deterred from doing so by the thought of a long and tiresome railroad journey, great expense, and a thousand and one other objections. These have been overcome by the inauguration of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company's personally-conducted tours to Jacksonville. A special train of unexcelled equipment makes the run from New York to Jacksonville in thirty hours; a tourist agent and chaperon accompany each tour to look after the comfort of passengers while *en route*; and the low rates offered bring the tours within the means of almost every one.

The tours allow two weeks' stay in Florida. The rate, including transportation, meals *en route*, and Pullman berth on special train, is $50.00 from New York, and $48.00 from Philadelphia; proportionate rates from other points.

For further information apply to Ticket Agents, or address Tourist Agent, 1196 Broadway, New York, or Room 411 Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, to whom application for space should also be made.—*a.*

WE MUST HAVE 100 MORE

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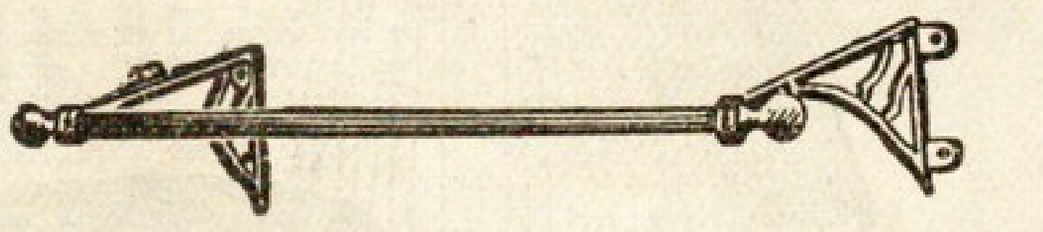
LADIES I MAKE BIG WAGES doing pleasant home work, and will gladly send full particulars to all sending 2c. stamp. **MISS M. B. STEBBINS, LAWRENCE, MICH.**

PATENTS PATTISON & NESBIT, Wash., D. C. Advice as to patentability and Inventors' Guide free.

Agents Make from $50. to $500. a month at home or traveling. Work for young and old. Don't rely on others. Earn your own living. Outfit furnished free. Get to work at once. CHICAGO SCALE CO. Chicago

SHORTHAND taught by MAIL. First lesson FREE. W. G. CHAFFEE, Oswego, N. Y.

TOWEL RACK.



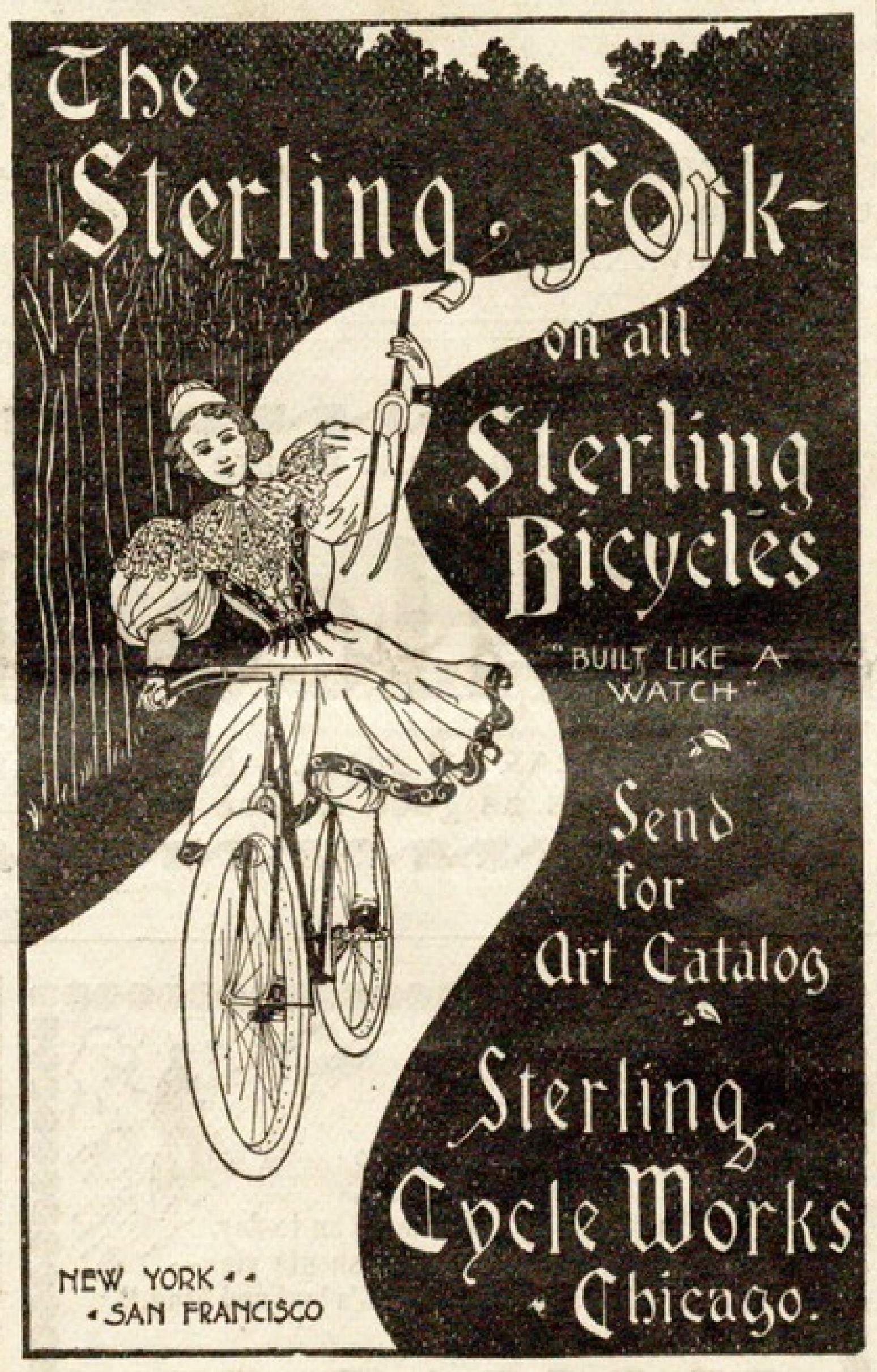
Nickel-plated and polished Brackets and Rod, 18 inches wide. Sent, prepaid, for 30 cents.

Larger sizes: 3 feet, with extra center bracket, 50 cents; 6 feet, with five brackets, running length of bath-tub, $1.00.

NAPKIN RINGS.

Handsome and heavily plated, $1.50 per dozen. Sample 15 cents.

DONOHUE & MORAND, 21 Arlington Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.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— TO —

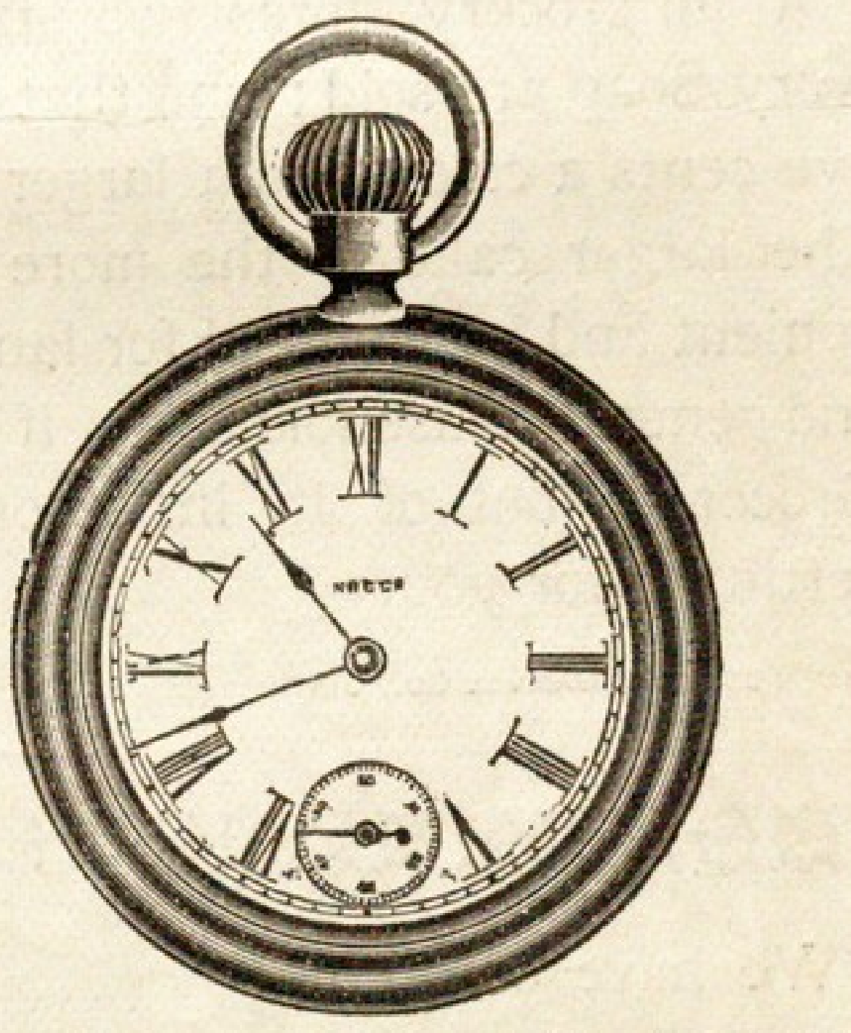
Boys and Girls.

The proprietors of the **New York Ledger** hereby offer to give, free of all cost, to any boy or girl who will sell

10 New York Ledgers

each week for 20 weeks the watch described below. If any boy or girl does not want to wait 20 weeks to get this watch, it can be secured by selling **20 Ledgers for 10 Weeks,** that is, averaging a sale of 20 copies for 10 weeks.

Free to Boys and Girls.



This watch is not a toy or sun-dial, but a serviceable timepiece, guaranteed by the manufacturer to be accurate and durable, which guarantee is assumed by us. It is a stem-winder and stem-setter, and comes in either a gilt or a nickel case, according to choice. It is sent securely packed, and in the box we place a serviceable chain. In the times of our grandfathers, such a watch, even if it could have been made, would have cost a considerable sum of money. This watch is not for sale, but is sent free, postpaid, as a gift to every boy and girl who sells the number of copies of the New York *Ledger* required by the above offer, namely, an average of 10 copies for 20 weeks, or an average of 20 copies for 10 weeks.

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We want just such ones to work for us a little while every week selling *Ledgers* at 5 cents each—selling the old, reliable, original and best story paper published—the New York *Ledger*.

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If the postmaster or any responsible party will send us the name of a smart boy or girl to sell the *Ledger* every week in his town, we will put an extra *Ledger* in the agent's bundle each week, to be delivered free to the party appointing the agent so long as the agent sells the *Ledger*.

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..............................189

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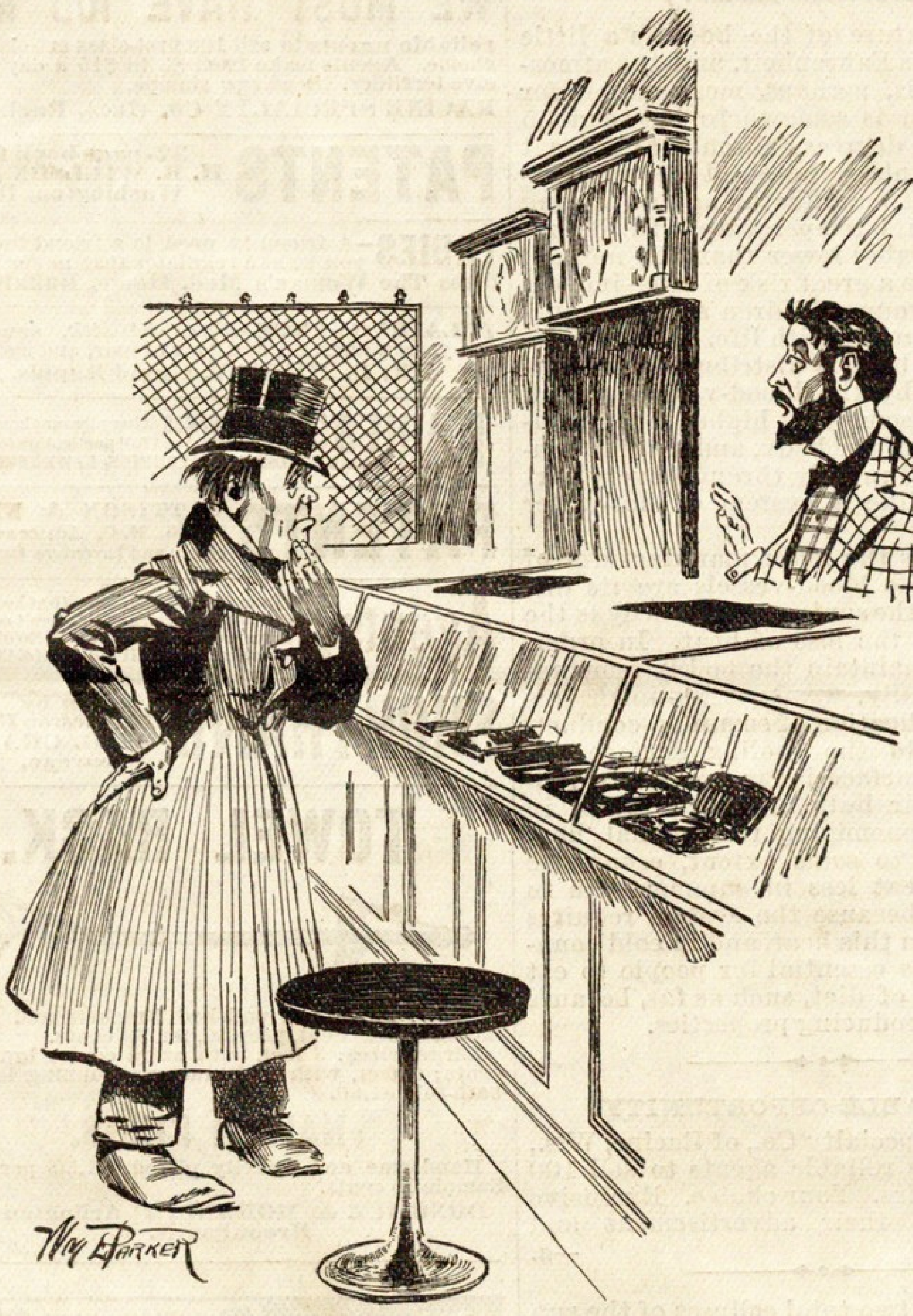

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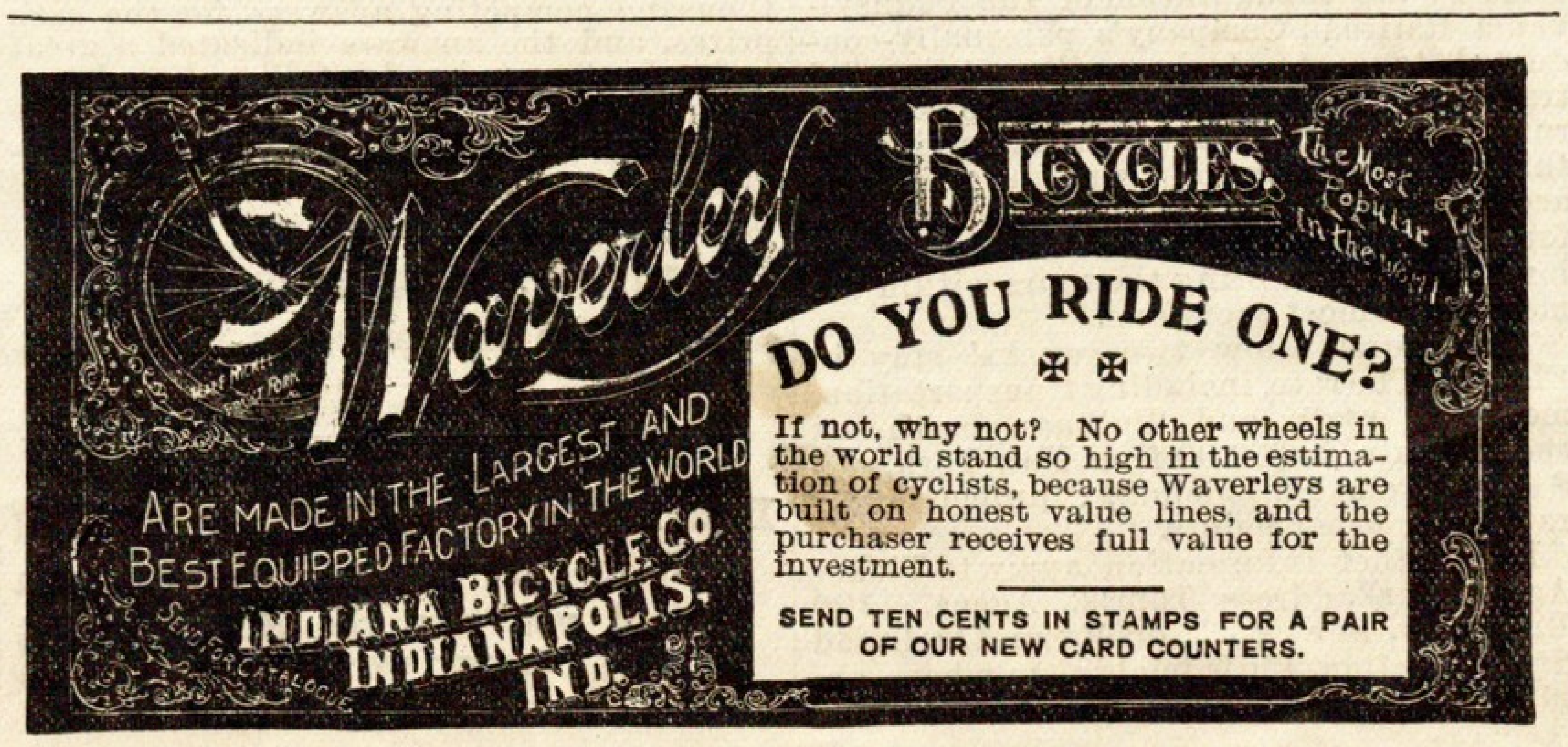
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